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CHEVELEY;

OR,

THE MAN OF HONOUR.

BY

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*Rosina Boyle (Wheeler) Bulwer-Lytton,
Countess Lytton*

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ERRATA.—Page 244, in last line but one of last motto to Chapter X., for “Cambyces” read “Cambyses.”—P. 249, the word “to” at the last line must be inserted after the word “resorted.”—P. 266, l. 21, for “ancienne” read “ancien.”—P. 280, l. 1, for “recherché” read “recherchée.”—P. 285, l. 1, for “croi” read “crois.”—P. 285, l. 4, for “tait toi” read “tais-toi.”

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CHEVELEY :

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CHAPTER I.

"Waltz, the comet, whiskers and the new government illuminated heaven and earth, in all their glory, much about the same time: of these, the comet only has disappeared; the other three continue to astonish us still!"—

Note by Printer's Devil to Lord Byron's "WALTZ."

"Most men are slaves, because they cannot pronounce the monosyllable 'to.'"—*Lord Clarendon.*

Lord Chesterfield was reckoned for one of the wisest men in England. "When one is in opposition," said he, "it is very easy indeed to know what to say; but when one is minister, it is difficult to know what *not* to say."

DR. JOHNSON has observed, "that all the performances of the human heart, at which we look with praise or wonder, are instances of the resistless force of perseverance. It is by this that the quarry becomes a pyramid, and that distant countries are united with canals. If a man was to compare the effect of a single stroke of the

pickaxe, or of one impression of the spade, with the general design and last result, he would be overwhelmed by the sense of their disproportion ; yet these petty operations, incessantly continued, in time surmount the greatest difficulties, and mountains are levelled, and oceans bounded, by the slender force of human beings."

Lord Melford was apparently of the same opinion ; for, upon Cheveley's arrival at the Clarendon, he found a note from the Premier, requesting him to call upon him at his house in — street, at his earliest convenience.—“That would be never,” said Lord Cheveley, as he tossed the note aside ; but this Lord Melford could not hear, and if he had, he would not have heeded it ; for he was at the time in a dilemma, from which it was necessary to extricate himself and his colleagues *coute qu'il coute*, and in doing so, if he could at the same time make a powerful proselyte in the person of Lord Cheveley, his position would be strengthened, and his triumph be complete. Lord Denham, whose head was to the full as long and somewhat deeper than the Premier's, and who was, moreover, the cynosure of the radical party,

had, as we have before stated, immediately returned from the North, on the demise of the king, and calculating upon his influence with a royal and illustrious lady, thought, as far as office went, that he would only have to choose, and to accept; but, as two suns cannot shine in one hemisphere, neither can two paramount ambitions run amicably abreast in the same political race; consequently, while Lord Denham's great object was to remain at home and about court, it was equally Lord Melford's object to prevent his doing so. Something must be done; but what? aye, there was the rub;—but possessing as he did an abundance of prompt decision and courage, which in itself amounts to genius, and nine times out of ten makes to attempt and to succeed synonymous; and having in his political game first played the knave and then lead the queen, a little more finessing was an easy and natural result by which he might hope to secure all the honours to himself. Lord Denham's wish had been to succeed Lord Protocol, as minister for foreign affairs; but Lord Protocol had no idea of being succeeded, nor in this instance was it Lord Melford's desire

that he should ; there were the colonies going begging ; if he could but get Lord Cheveley to accept of the governor-generalship, it would be a great point gained, because this would be so publicly coalescing with the whigs ; and Lord Denham, in the event of Lord Cheveley's being brought round, must be got back to St. Petersburg, Vienna, or even sent to Ireland, as a *pis aller* ; but unfortunately, Lord Cheveley, for reasons best known to himself, delayed so long in his journey from Venice, that he did not reach England till the middle of December.

Rebellions, like time and tide, wait for no man, and republican patriots like Lord Denham, are equally impatient of any delay that thwarts their ambition,—I beg pardon, their patriotic views. The colonial disturbances were daily increasing, and Lord Denham was hourly giving the Melford administration unequivocal and alarming proofs of how deeply he felt and how much he resented their want of good faith and hollow conduct towards him ; in short, a crisis had arrived, and it was necessary to meet it, which Lord Melford did by going to Lord Denham, and saying it was her Majesty's per-

sonal wish, that he should accept the colonies, as there was no one else in whose zeal and abilities her Majesty, or her Majesty's ministers, could place sufficient confidence to trust with so important and arduous a mission.

"Thank God, this at last is settled," thought Lord Melford, as he finished the complimentary peroration; he was therefore not a little taken aback when Lord Denham drew himself up to his full height; his saturnine face growing still darker, his determined mouth becoming more rigid, and his penetrating flashing eyes piercing with a sort of microscopic power into those of Lord Melford, as he coldly replied,—

"Then, my Lord, if it's her Majesty's personal wish, it is worth asking as a personal favour."

"Oh, yes, certainly, of course," stammered Lord Melford; "only it was to save time that I intimated her Majesty's wishes," laying great emphasis on the last word; "but," added he, looking at his watch, that grand resource of even prime ministers, when they are in a dilemma; "I am going down to Windsor now, may I convey to her Majesty your consent to her wishes?"

“I can give but one answer,” replied Lord Denham haughtily, as he placed his hand upon the bell, “as soon as her Majesty is graciously pleased to make known to me what are her wishes.”

“Spoken like yourself, my lord,” said Lord Melford, shaking his hand apparently with the warmest friendship, as he hurried from the room to regain his carriage. “To Windsor,” said he, flinging himself into the far corner of it. Crack went the whips, and on flew the horses, but they did not fly half as fast as Lord Melford’s thoughts. “D—n those Lucifer spirits,” muttered the *poco curante* Premier, pulling his under lip, “they give one more trouble than all the rest of the world put together. I wish the fellow was not so rich and independant; however, we are not troubled with many of the same genus, for most of our colleagues are such poor devils both in purse and spirit, that they will take anything—but offence.” Now the cause of his lordship’s present *embarras*, arose not so much from Lord Denham’s restiveness, as from an anxiety touching the best method of making Her Majesty’s wishes known to herself,

and when known, of getting her to convey them to Lord Denham; but as no one knew better than the gallant Premier, that “faint heart never won a fair lady,” by the time he arrived at Windsor, he was as brave as a lion. Being immediately admitted to the presence, he lost no time in illustrating Hobbes’ definition of eloquence, viz. “the putting together of passionate words, and applying them to the passions and interests of the hearer;” and so well did he succeed, that in less than half an hour, he had convinced Her Majesty, that Lord Denham’s acceptance of the Colonies, was not only one of her principal wishes, but that it was requisite to the salvation of that part of Her Majesty’s dominions; the next step was easy, and the youthful Sovereign consented in her “most sweet voice” to write an autograph letter to Lord Denham, begging his acceptance of the mission, and flatteringly wording the request as a personal favour. A courier being despatched, with this “consummation,” that Lord Melford had so “devoutly wished,” his lordship remained to dinner, for he was of the same opinion as Epictetus, that “a table without music, is little better than a manger

for music at meals is like a carbuncle set in gold, or the signet of an emerald highly burnished." And in these our degenerate days, where is music at meals to be had, except at the tables of Majesty? Alas ! for the best organized human plans, they have still so much of the Hydra in them, that no sooner do we lop off one fitful head, than lo ! another appears, and so it was in the present instance, for Lord Denham, not content with receiving Her Majesty's personal request, and being made acquainted with her wishes, which as he loyally and gallantly assured her, 'to know was to obey,' must needs in his turn demand a favour, that of being allowed to furnish the whole *frais* of the expedition, from his own privy purse. The depth and subtilty of the request, which left Lord Denham perfectly unfettered, as to any appointments he might in his turn make, was a source of much annoyance and embarrassment to Lord Melford at the time, but still more so at a subsequent period, when he found it expedient solemnly to deny all knowledge of the appointments of some most disreputable persons, whom Lord Denham had enrolled among his suite, at Lord Melford's

especial solicitation. He nevertheless was "an honourable man, so are they all honourable men."

Now when Cheveley arrived in England, Lord Denham was in the thick of his preparations for his voyage across the Atlantic; and although some time before, Lord Protocol had resolutely and angrily refused to move one inch towards making way for Lord Denham, yet so little did the innocent Premier (himself now "hushed and satiate" with good things,) remember the hungry cravings of human and political nature, that he actually indulged the dream of Lord Protocol's resigning, in a paroxysm of proselytism, for Lord Cheveley, though he had selfishly refused to do so for Lord Denham. Nor was this such a chimera after all, as Lord Melford only judged by himself, and therefore knew how much more the Whigs will do for their enemies, than their friends.

Thus stood matters when Lord Cheveley found Lord Melford's note. Awful! as the moment is, that severs us from the object we love, and insulates us as it were from all the living world, yet the temporary annihilation that accompanies it, spares us for awhile the acutest

pangs of absence, it is not till time has widened and consolidated the dreadful chasm in our existence, that we awaken to a full conviction of all its horrors, for it is not till then that we feel the hollow hours lagging slowly on, as though they would keep pace with our own decrepitude of heart, through which nothing glides but the vain shadows of the past ! It was not therefore until he had actually left Italy, that Lord Cheveley felt his utter wretchedness and desolation : and London in December was not calculated to lessen it, as it only presents a pea-soup fog, which renders the necessary and natural process of respiration, almost what Dr. Johnson's idea of fine music ought to be, impossible ! The solemn stillness, never broken but every second hour, by the cry of "milk" or "muffins," and the roll of the solitary chariot wheels, of some peculiarly lucky doctor ; while human beings are like the refugees in the Simplon, "few and far between," and those consisting of a few penny-aliners required to be on the spot all the year round for puffs, politics, and Daffy's Elixir : these, with some dozen dingy looking knaves of clubs, who cannot breathe any atmosphere but

White's, Brooks's, or the Athenæum, and some half dozen of the tail, their hats at the back of their heads, their hands in their pockets, (where they have it all to themselves,) and their faces half hid in green worsted comfortables, looking very synonymous with their own favorite dinner, namely, "a pig's face on a bolster of cabbage!" constitute London in December.

Anglo-gastronomes, may not know this *plat*. I must in justice add that the name was invented by a *wag* of the tail. Having for the last few months enjoyed a happy absence of newspapers, which like other "d—d good-natured friends," are always sure to tell you something disagreeable, Lord Cheveley thought he might as well fortify himself with a little tincture of politics, before he called upon Lord Melford—accordingly he drove first to the Carlton; enveloped as he was in a sable-lined great coat, the collar of which concealed every feature but his eyes, he could not but marvel at the quick recognition and overwhelming congratulations of persons whom he scarcely knew! "Ah," thought he, "had my position been reversed, and I had lost a fortune and a title, instead of having gained one, how

very short-sighted my nearest, and dearest, friends, would have been ! I even doubt whether upon hearing my name, they would have remembered me ; yet now these worthy people whom I scarcely know, generously remember me, nay more, have the tenderest interest in my welfare, the warmest sympathy with my new-blown honours ! Oh world ! world ! thou art lizard-eyed, and seest nothing that the sun does not shine upon.” Finding it impossible to read the papers, from the greetings and congratulations of his numerous friends, Lord Cheveley thought it better to go at once, and get his visit to Lord Melford over, especially as it was his intention to go down to Cheveley Place the next day, where he intended to spend the Christmas, for Cheveley Place was in the same county as Blichingly, and only five miles from it, and Julia had been there, and might be there again, at all events there was a melancholy pleasure in being near where she had ever been ; added to this, his mother, whose memory he all but adored, was buried there ; and Hilton, his paternal estate, was in Yorkshire, and he did not like the neighbourhood ; the fact was, he wished to go to

Cheveley, and who that had the power, ever yet lacked good reasons for doing what they liked. When Lord Cheveley reached —— Street, it was about half past three, but so dark, that the lamp in the hall was lit. The servant having given in his name before he got out of the carriage, the porter was duly prepared with his best bow ; but to Cheveley's inquiry of whether any one was with Lord Melford, and if he could see him then? he remained silent; and the footman hesitated, till the Groom of the Chambers solved all difficulties, by stepping forward from the inner hall, and saying, in a voice that might have brought over one half the opposition—

“ If your lordship will have the goodness to walk up stairs, my lord will be ready to receive you immediately.”

So accordingly up he walked, and was shown into a room, not over large, where blazed a bright fire of Kendal coal ; on the table burnt a pair of candles in *or moulu*, or gilt library candlesticks ; the Groom of the Chambers shook the cushions of a bergère, drew it to the fire, snuffed the candles, and withdrew. On the table were divers piles of printed foolscap

packets, tied with red tape, such as bills passed, and to be passed, two or three volumes of parliamentary debates, "Smith's Wealth of Nations," "Bentham on Popular Fallacies," and a great curiosity, in the shape of a manuscript German-text copy of an unpublished work of Cicero's, "*De Ordinandi Republica et de Inveniendis Orationum Exordiis*," the original of which was formerly in the possession of Cardinal Mazarine, and is at present, I believe, in the library at Vienna; there was also a most official profusion of envelopes, and huge sticks of red sealing wax: under the former Lord Cheveley detected two other books.

Upon drawing them forth, they proved to be the "*Last Book of Beauty*," and one of Paul de Kock's novels, "*Le Mari, l'Amant, et la Femme*." Cheveley could not help smiling, as he remembered the practical knowledge the Premier had had of all three characters, and how, under all the decencies and dignities of office, he had detected the nature of the man; but he had scarcely replaced the books, sorry at having disturbed them, as they were evidently not intended for public view, when his attention

was arrested by the loud opening of a door in the passage, and a voice exclaiming, rather above cabinet pitch, "Remember, I am either with you or against you, my lord:" this was followed by a forced cough from another person, and Lord Melford's voice calling loudly over the stairs for Lord Protocol's carriage. Lord Protocol was the utterer of the prophetic "remember," and the whole speech was in answer to Lord Melford's last attempt to get him to resign in favour of Lord Cheveley; however, no sooner had the sound of Lord Protocol's chariot-wheels died away in Park-lane, in their homeward course, than the folding doors in the room where Lord Cheveley sat were opened by Lord Melford himself, who advanced with many smiles, and that two-handed cordiality which costs nothing, and often buys a great deal.

"I'm delighted to see you, my dear marquis, and hope I have the pleasure of being the first to call you so?" said he, as he conducted Lord Cheveley through an inner room to a third, and closed the door. Cheveley took the fauteuil next the fire, that Lord Melford pointed to, but the latter stood opposite to him, his elbow

leaning on the mantel-piece. Standing is a much more diplomatic position than sitting, for if any thing occurs during conference to disconcert or embarrass, it is much easier to shift one's position, and tutor one's countenance.

"The courier found you at Venice, did he not?" recommenced Lord Melford.

"Yes," was the laconic reply. Here an awkward pause ensued, during which Lord Melford looked at the nails of his right hand. His lordship had been, what was called in the war, a remarkably handsome man, in those happy days when male attire was shapeless and voluminous as a balloon when the gas is out, and figure was of no account; indeed, his face was still handsome, and his eyes, though blue, had all the effect of being dark, and were not unlike the most beautiful eyes in the world, those of a Blenheim dog. The chief source of a long career of popularity had been a sort of triple bob-major laugh, in which he indulged, on all occasions, even when he did not win; and having been a promising young man for forty years, it was not easy, when, at length, he began to perform the part of a great man, to

disencumber himself of this undignified laugh, which then, like many other of his early friends, he would gladly have been rid of, and the effect of it was often ludicrous in the extreme, for sometimes in the midst of a merry peal, the recollection of his present dignity would cause him to check it suddenly, which had precisely the same ridiculous effect as the sudden stop of the sudden laugh of the magician's trunkless head in "Zee, zi, zo, zoo," or the "Bronze Horse," as converted into an Easter piece; and the instantaneous rigidity of the Premier's muscles when he reined himself in, nearly threw every one else into convulsions. Montaigne says that "fear sometimes adds wings to the heels, and sometimes nails them to the ground, and fetters them from moving," and so it was with the tongue in the present instance: the fear of defeating his object, by being too precipitate, kept Lord Melford silent for a few seconds, and then made him resort to indifferent questions, to avoid coming too directly to the point.

"The De Ciffords were at Venice, were they not?" asked he.

"Ye—s; it was with them I was staying."

“She’s a handsome person, don’t you think so?”

“Ve—very,” and Cheveley got a most troublesome fit of coughing.

“He’s clever in a way; writes good political articles,” persisted Lord Melford.

“I can’t fancy his doing anything well; but then I dislike him so very much, that I am not an impartial judge.”

“He’s a disagreeable man certainly, such a pompous, stilted manner.”

“I think him an egregious fool besides.”

“I believe he is somewhat of a fribble,” conceded his ally, the Premier; “dabbles in carving and gilding, and fusses about tables and chairs.”

“I don’t call a man a fribble,” said Cheveley, “for being fond of beautiful furniture, more than for having a taste for pictures and statues; Cicero, we all know, was neither foppish nor luxurious in his habits or expenditure, and yet he gave 10,000 sesterces for a citron-wood table, and half that sum for a small maple cabinet, more, I grant, than any cabinet could be worth even in *his* days.”

“Ha ! ha ! ha !” zee, zi, zo, zoo’d the Premier ; but suddenly remembering not only his dignity, but that here was an opening, he drew up, and became “every inch” a Prime Minister, as he replied, in a complimentary tone, “Why, provided that it was a Cabinet that your lordship formed part of, I don’t think you would find many to coincide in that opinion.”

“Then,” said Cheveley, bowing to the hollow compliment, “I fear they must know even less than I do of the trade of cabinet-making ; for I have always understood, that materials that have long been used in other forms, if only hastily and slightly veneered, on the expediency of the moment, will never dove-tail well into any new work.”

“Well, but metaphor apart,” replied Lord Melford, protruding his head, and looking Cheveley for the first time full in the face, “you surely are by far too enlightened to suppose that this country can ever again be governed upon Tory principles ; the times are changing, and not with the locomotive slowness of the pillions, and jennets, and lumbering coaches of our ancestors, but with the rapidity and diffu-

sion of steam and rail-roads; and we must change with them—aye, and through the medium of the vehicles they provide, and not rummage the Tower for Henry the Eighth's saddle, or Queen Elizabeth's gilt car."

"I agree that the times are not changing, but changed; and that to a certain degree it is necessary to change, or rather to progress with them; for that the same legislative code that was comparatively perfect in the days of our forefathers, would, without occasional alterations and remodelling, be as obsolete and inconvenient to us their descendants as their flowing wigs and trunk hose would be to our modern notions of the convenient in dress, no one will attempt to deny; but what I object to is, that in altering the fashion, we go well nigh to destroying the material, and stripping to that degree of bareness that must endanger our constitution."

"Why," replied Lord Melford, "for that matter, nothing human can be perfect; and perhaps, '*Nullum fit magnum ingenium sine mixtura dementiæ*;' and the ablest measures will always have some great handle, of which the many can take hold. Yet it's quite impos-

sible that the wisdom of one age can be the wisdom of all ages. Were Lord Bacon living now, his genius would be the same, but his manner of evincing it would be very different; and Cardinal Wolsey's diplomacy, though equally subtle and energetic, would perforce have been poised on a different basis."

"Quite true," said Cheveley; "but I deny that in any age Lord Bacon would from expediency have become a Lord Bolingbroke, or a Lord Brougham, any more than Andrew Marvel would ever have turned, through the pressure of the times, into a John Wilkes, or a William Cobbett."

"I am not quite sure of that," zee, zi, zo, zoo'd the Premier; "circumstances make involuntary changes in us all."

"You think, then," said Cheveley, smiling, and with rather more point than was quite consistent with his usual good breeding—"that, did Licinius Mutianus flourish now, he might perhaps prefer dining every day at court, to entertaining his friends in a hollow tree?"*

* See Pliny's account of the immense hollow plane-tree in Lycia, wherein the Consul Licinius Mutianus used, with his eighteen friends, to dine and sup, and even to sleep, in preference to his own marble chamber and richly wrought bed of beaten gold, with canopies of rare embroidery.

The best of all possible ways to parry a conversational thrust is not to appear to feel it, much less to wince under it; so Lord Melford suddenly recollected that it was very *infra dig.* for a Prime Minister to have time for metaphysical discussions; and abruptly exclaimed—

“However, as my time is full from half-past four till eight, I had better come to the point at once with you, my lord; frankly then, can I induce you to become an ornament to, and a supporter of, my administration?” And as he put this question in a quick, but energetic voice, Lord Melford fixed his eyes on him, as though he could look him into acquiescence.

“Then I answer as frankly, my lord,” replied Cheveley, rising, and putting on his gloves,—“you *can not*: there are three reasons against it, which might be reduced to one—that of my political tenets differing totally from your lordship’s; next, my talents (if I have any) don’t lie in politics, because I have never been spurred to them by inclination; and, thirdly, though Napoleon declared that every man has his price, if you can but find it out, I have none, because *I want nothing.*”

The last was the only reason that Lord Melford could fully comprehend, and thought cogent; the two first were, in his opinion, "frivolous and vexatious," for he had been accustomed to convert Tories into Whigs by the magic wand of office, and to stock the state with persons who had not the slightest political genius:—in short, he was as good a metamorphoser of bipeds as the Yorkshire ostler was of quadrupeds; who, when a traveller asked him what breed a strange-looking animal of the canine species was of, that was squatted before the door of the inn, replied—"Whoy, sur, when measter got him he wur a greyhound, and we called him Floy (Fly); then we fattened him up a bit, and he wur a foxhound, and we called un Trap; but now we've cut the ears and tail on him, and made a mastiff on him, we calls him Lion!" There was nothing, therefore, further for Lord Melford to do but to bow coldly, express his regrets, and change the subject as quickly as possible; which he did by observing, as Cheveley was taking possession of his hat and cane, as a preliminary to his departure,—

"You've heard of poor Neville's accident, I suppose?"

“No,” replied Cheveley; “what Neville?”

“Lady De Clifford’s father: he dislocated his ankle the other day at Melton, and is now in town under Ashley Cooper; you know that he is going to sell his house in Berkeley Square, and live entirely in Yorkshire?” added Lord Melford, raising his voice, as they had now reached the door that opened into the passage.

“I don’t know him personally,” said Lord Cheveley; “but am sorry for his accident.”

And here the two peers separated, shaking hands three pressures less cordially than when they had met. Cheveley to return to his own thoughts at the Clarendon, and Lord Melford back to his library chair, to extract all the consolation possible out of the reflexion that, as Lord Protocol would not resign, and there was no other office actually vacant at the time, it was perhaps less embarrassing to him, on the whole, that Lord Cheveley did not accede to his overtures: had he been some poor devil who had been speaking himself into a consumption, writing his fingers to the bone in pamphlets and leading articles, or wasting his patrimony at elections in support of the Whig interest gene-

rally, and the Melford administration particularly; he might have been put off, and kept on, with promises and prevarications; but a nobleman of princely fortune could not be treated in the same way: it would be necessary to pile his coffers still higher with the solid realities of *political gratitude*! “After all, perhaps it is better as it is for the present, and there is no knowing what time may bring about; he is young—love often does wonders, and makes as many politicians as it mars,” said the Premier, thinking of his own pretty niece, as he dipped his pen into the ink, and wrote the following paragraph for all the ministerial papers of the next day:—

“We have good reasons for knowing that the report current last week in several political circles, of the Premier having made overtures to the young Marquis of Cheveley, to join the Melford administration, is totally without foundation. The fact of the noble Viscount having been a great friend of the late Marquis’s since the days of Fox,—and being also a personal friend of his nephew’s, the present Marquis,—may perhaps have given rise to this report;

especially as we believe we are correct in stating that Lord Melford is the only person the young Marquis has yet called upon since his return from the continent."

Now there had been no report whatever about Lord Melford's overtures to Lord Cheveley; but no doubt there would be, and so it was as well to be a little Irish, and contradict it beforehand. And what is the use of being the proprietor of that Hercules of Policinello's, the Press, if one cannot pull the strings of the puppets when and how one pleases?

CHAPTER II.

“ Lords of the quill, whose critical assaults
 O'erthrow whole quartos, with their quires of faults ;
 Who soon detect, and mark where'er we fail,
 And prove our marble with too nice a nail !
 Democritus himself was not so bad ;
He only thought, but you would make us mad !”

Lord Byron's Hints from Horace.

A modern critic is a thing who runs
 All ways, all risks, to evitate his duns ;
 Let but the D—I ask him home to dine,
 And lend him money, while he gave him wine,
 Howe'er obscene the trash old Nick might write,
 Its praise his grateful guest would still indite :—
 Swear it was moral, beautiful, refined !
 And that each page evinced *a spotless mind !*

“ Yet think of this, when many a tongue,
 Whose busy accents whisper blame,
 Would do the heart *thou lovest* wrong,
 And brand a” *still un-*“ blighted name.”

Lord Byron.

I ACKNOWLEDGE my obtuseness, and confess
 that I have never been able clearly to define the
 chronological point alluded to in that often-
 quoted line—

“ Ere England's griefs began.”

Had it not been written so long before their advent, I should, from my own personal experience, feel quite convinced that it was a national reflection upon those banes of domestic happiness, clubs and cabriolets, pipes and politics, rail-roads and reform-bills;—but, no, as I said before, the stanza was penned prior to these cluster-plagues; and till they appeared, what could England's griefs have been? To be sure, I'm not very well versed in English history, but still I think, as men went—and still more, as men go—that Harry the Eighth was a good sort of man enough (whatever queens may think to the contrary), for he did not establish the decapitation and repudiating of wives into a general custom; but, with a proper sense of his kingly dignity, reserved this luxury as a royal privilege.

Ah! poor man! how he would stare, could he look out of his grave and see the pitch luxury has got to now, even among the Commons of England! But I must leave this interesting subject, and return to Lord Cheveley; so “one at a time, if you please,” as poor, dear Henry the Eighth said to his wives. There is nothing which tends more to aggravate a feeling of deso-

lation than a large room untenanted save by ourselves; and the paraphernalia of a fine dinner, which we have neither appetite nor companionship to help us through. Lord Cheveley felt this, as he mechanically sipped his claret, after his solitary meal at the Clarendon. He rose and took two or three turns up and down the room; he remembered (and it was the only part of their conversation that at the time he *did* remember) that Lord Melford had said the Nevilles were in town; and then followed innumerable lamentations upon his ill-luck in not knowing them. “It would be some consolation to know *her* father and mother; but no, it is better not—did I not promise that I would never, directly or indirectly, come in her way? Aye, the promise was easy to make; but, oh! how hard to keep! And Saville, what is he about? surely, surely he might have written one line;—but there it is:—

‘ Who ne’er have loved, and loved in vain,
Can neither feel nor pity pain.’

He is too happy in his happy love to think of his poor friend; or perhaps he suspects how it is with me, and plays the prudent—people are

so coldly calculating for others.” Cheveley sat down; his elbows rested on the table—his face was buried in his hands—the recollections of the last few months of his life crowded, as it were, to a focus in his heart, and he sobbed like a child. Memory is the conscience of love; and from the moment we leave what we have loved (either from principle or the want of it), its murmurs leave us no peace. Again Cheveley paced the room, and with that restlessness of spirit which ever makes the unhappy think that they will be better anywhere than where they are, he rang the bell, and ordered the carriage.

“Will your lordship take coffee before you go out?” inquired Sanford, when he had received the order.

“No, I’m going to the Athenæum:—I’ll get some there. Let the carriage come round directly.”

What hot-beds of masculine selfishness those said clubs are! No wonder the homes for which it is neither convenient nor agreeable to provide the bare necessities of life, should be deserted for luxuries to be had at a cheaper rate; and even to those whose ample means

secure the same style of living at home: yet, to nine Englishmen out of ten, who detest ladies' society, and never desire to see a woman's face, unless it be those belonging to ladies of a certain description, the luxury of hats and dirty boots is irresistible, to say nothing of "the Club" and "the House of Commons" being always unquestionable places to note in the conjugal log-book. It would save a great deal of trouble to inquiring foreigners, if, for the future, lexicographers would insert opposite the word "home"—a place for keeping wives and children; "mutton chops"—food for ditto.

Were dictionaries thus explicit, tourists taking inventories of foreign countries might avoid even the little trifling errors made by a recent German traveller in his book, where he states that the "English physicians always wear black, and sometimes swords; that all the Opposition eat boiled beef; and that a Tory dinner-table is distinguished by little rolls, while the Whigs show their vulgarity by uncouth hunches of bread!"

When Cheveley reached the Athenæum, a group of four were standing before one of the fire-places. He took possession of a table at

one side of the chimney-piece; and while he is busy turning over the newspapers and magazines, you and I, dear reader, for want of something better to do, will take a look at the *partie carrée*. One was a good-natured looking elderly gentleman, a Mr. Spoonbill: his physiognomy was that of a snipe, whose bill had been ground down: his *cheveleur* was thin and grizzled, but the few remaining hairs he had were rampant, and formed an inverted V over his forehead; in short, he was one of those good creatures you often read of, but seldom see, who remained constant to wide-frilled shirts, ribbed silk stockings, watch-fobs and large seals, and who was always able—and, what was infinitely more extraordinary, *willing*—to lend a friend four or five hundred pounds. His *métier* was that of *raconteur* and diner-out; and for the last half century, not a debate of any importance had taken place without his having been present. He was a Whig of the old school; and now he sat in an equestrian attitude upon a chair, the ends of his snuff-coloured coat touching the ground; the back of the chair supporting his elbows, and his interlaced fingers supporting his chin, as his upward gaze was directed to a tall

lanky individual, with whom he was talking politics—for what else can Englishmen talk about?

The person he was at the moment listening to, and who was standing with his back to the fire, and his hands behind his back, was evidently the oracle of the party :—he was a Mr. York Fonnair, the Radical editor of a Sunday newspaper, called “ the Investigator.” His personal appearance was anything but prepossessing, being in features like a Calmuc Tartar, and in complexion like a badly embalmed mummy. Nevertheless he was unmistakably gentlemanlike, and about the most agreeable man in England ; brilliantly witty, and, what is rarer still, deeply humorous : add to which, he was unquestionably the best living English political writer, for his English was genuine, and his style terse and forcible in the extreme, having at once the solidity and the brilliancy of the diamond ;—but, alas ! like many other truly enlightened men, his morality was as lax as his opinions were liberal. And yet, among the shining lights which he so lauded and admired, there were many worse than him ; for he had neither turned his wife and children out of their home, to make

way for a mistress; nor then torn his children from their mother, in order to swamp a lesser injury in a greater; for, like

“Werter, to decent vice though much inclined,”

he had sufficient sense to think the world large enough for every one. Although professing the most ultra independence of principle, both in literary and political matters, it was ludicrous in the extreme, and somewhat disgusting, to see the utter trash in literature, and the disgraceful tergiversation in politics, that was lauded to the skies, or defended beyond them, in “the Investigator,” provided the perpetrator, whether through feeding, flattery, or financial arrangements, were but of his clique. However, great integrity and straightforwardness of purpose, can scarcely be expected from any man whose morals are derived from materialism, and whose ideas of purity of sentiment emanate from the life and writings of Jean Jacques, or from those who imitate him in both; while to read Paul de Kock, or

“Laugh in Rabelais’ easy chair,”

forms his *ne plus ultra* of enjoyment. Yet, consistency, what is it? I have not a dictionary

at hand, therefore I don't exactly know; and in these days, when "money in both pockets" is the only tune *littérateurs* or politicians care for, it is difficult for them to know *sur quel pied danser*.

Opposite Mr. York Fonnoir stood a jackall of his, and many others beside, in the person of Mr. Fuzboz; he was neither tall nor short, but remarkably plebeian-looking, which was the only thing candid about him: he wore white Russia ducks in December, and was not a little proud of being a very ugly and noseless likeness of a "great tragedian," whom he tried to imitate in all things, even to his hand-writing. Mr. Fuzboz was a sort of lick-dust to Mr. Fonnoir, and to Mr. anybody, and everybody else of any celebrity to whom he could get access; he it was who did the theatrical and other plasterings in "the Investigator;" and, above all, he it was who invented biographies of "Eminent Living Authors," for magazines and other works, suppressing the full-fledged progeny of elderly gentlewomen, and pioneering away wives, and other superfluous relations, of literary gentlemen, agreeably fettered by less ponderous ties; in short, he was a most useful

creature, good Mr. Fuzboz, being Bozzy to all the Dr. Johnsons, and Howel to all the Ben Jonsons of the day, to say nothing of his always having a stock of "Brummagem" enthusiasm on hand, and being a perfect Boreas at a puff.

Next to him, "though last, not least," stood Mr. Frederick Feedwell, who might not be worth mentioning, but that he had the honour of being a particular friend of Lord De Clifford's and Mr. Herbert Grimstone's: they constituted his only friends, and almost his only acquaintance, for his character was bad, even among the bad. About Mr. Frederick Feedwell there was nothing natural but his birth, his selfishness, and his stutter; nature had never intended him for a hero of any sort, for there was something *tant soit peu ridicule* in his whole appearance that militated against it. His features consisted of an immense pair of over-fed looking blue saucer eyes; his cheeks, since his last trip to Paris, were equally like those mysterious-looking pink saucers, with a dash of yellow over them, that are sometimes seen, amid cap-blocks, blonde, ribbon, and tulle, tossing about a lady's-maid's room, but for what purpose they only

know: his nose was very thick, and of the aspiring order, for it would turn up, in spite of his unwearying and constant efforts to pull or coax it downwards, and good things used his mouth as the print of the animals' feet did the entrance of the lion's den in the fable,—they all went in, but none came out. He was by nature thin, but from his Apician tastes he was getting an incipient paunch, which by pushing up his waistcoats, always gave them the appearance of being too short: he wished to be thought about thirty, but was, in reality, about eight-and-forty, and even under cover of an Hyperian chestnut wig, did not look an hour less than six-and-forty.

Mr. Frederick Feedwell's fortunes were as precarious and undefined as his birth: he had originally been intended for a diplomat, but, whether he proved too diplomatic at the gaming table or not, he failed, and then tried the bar, doubtless preferring that to being tried at it. The way in which he contrived to eat his terms was, by taking chambers in Lincoln's Inn, keeping a French artiste, and trying how many meals a day he could possibly manage, first by a course of late, and then by a course of early

rising. Next to himself, he loved his dinner better than anything in this world; and next to his dinner, he loved his cook, as the cause of that sublime effect. This love it was that brought about one epoch in his life, in the shape of his first duel. In the chambers beneath him vegetated a briefless eater of beef-steaks, and digester of Blackstone: now it so happened that, all unworthy as he was of such an honour, he shared the same kitchen with Mr. Frederick Feedwell; and one luckless day he dared to be hungry at five o'clock, when his laundress repaired to the kitchen to get ready a broil for him, little knowing the one that awaited her.

Monsieur Horsdœuvre, Mr. Frederick Feedwell's *chef*, was in the act of marinading a hare, and the idea of having the fire spoilt by such an "infernal machine" as a gridiron, was more than either his patience as a man, or his genius as a cook, could bear; so accordingly, after remonstrating in vain with the beef-steak beldam, he flew up stairs, spit in hand, to his sympathising master, and, with the air of a Sylla, or rather of Talma in "Sylla," indignantly appealed to him whether he was to be

insulted in his own kitchen? and whether the *entremets* of Monsieur were to be endangered for the dinner of a *Monsieur Jaqueson* (Jackson)? “*Animal qui sait manger, mais qui ne sait pas goûter!*” concluded Monsieur Horsdœuvre, raising his voice, and thumping his heart with his right hand, conscious, in one sublime sentence, of having uttered the most degrading aspersion with which one human being could stigmatise another.

“Certainly not, my good Horsdœuvre,” said the great Frederick; “you may retire; I will myself avenge your injuries, for they are mine.”

The great *chef* doffed his cotton night-cap, clasped his hands, and withdrew, showering down three courses of thanks upon his generous and benevolent master, who immediately sat down and penned a challenge to the unfortunate Mr. Jackson, who, with a slippered foot on each hob, was anticipating hot beef-steaks, and not dreaming of cold lead. At first Mr. Jackson thought Mr. Frederick Feedwell must have lost his appetite, and next his wits, in consequence of it: then he thought the whole thing must have originated in some strange mistake; so accord-

ingly he tried to remonstrate with him upon the more than absurdity of fighting a duel about a kitchen fire ! but the more Mr. Jackson tried to explain and apologise, the more injured and insulted Mr. Frederick Feedwell felt, and the more indignant he grew ; so the duel he insisted upon, and the duel he had : pistols and seconds were procured, and Wormwood Scrubbs, and six in the morning, fixed upon for the next day but one ; Herbert Grimstone was to be Mr. Feedwell's second. Here I must record a touching little trait of considerate amiability in Frederick's character : a *ci devant* diplomatic acquaintance had sent him a case of *âmes damnées** from the Bosphorus ; and Monsieur Horsdœuvre, next to his skill in dressing sturgeon, was celebrated for his *salmis* of *âme damnée*, which, with hock and shalot, *et le moindre soupçon de curier*, he contrived to render almost a facsimile of woodcocks. The Dowager Lady Dangledog, Frederick's aunt, had that morning sent a quantity of game and venison, so that altogether his larder was well stocked ; and the very morning of the duel Horsdœuvre

* Particular kind of seaguls so called.

had received orders for a splendid banquet "in the chamber of Apollo." Yet, with fire-arms around him, and death staring him in the face, he neither forgot his friends nor their dinner; but, with the *sang froid* of a truly great man, sat down and wrote the following circular to the only three men in London whom at that time he knew, namely, Lord De Clifford, Herbert Grimstone, and a low attorney of the name of Loadall:

"My dear fellow, should I fall, pray come and dine at my chambers to-day at seven, as Horsdœuvre will be hurt if there is no one to eat his dinner; and while you are discussing his incomparable *âmes damnées*, think of your faithful friend,

"FRED. FEEDWELL."

But the one who could best appreciate the *âmes damnées*, the fates decreed should be there to do so, for Mr. Frederick Feedwell returned uninjured from the field of glory, as poor Mr. Jackson seemed fated to miss fire on all occasions; and the seconds succeeded so well in reconciling the hostile parties, that Mr. Frederick Feedwell upon regaining his drawing-

room in Lincoln's Inn, turned round facetiously to Mr. Herbert Grimstone, and said,—

“ My de-de-de-dear fellow, as I could not kill him in a de-de-de-duel, I'll kill him with a dinner ; for common people always die of a good dinner,—that is, of not ne-ne-ne-knowing what they eat.”

And accordingly Mr. Jackson was asked to dinner, and became the butt of Mr. Frederick Feedwell and his friends. The next two years of his life Mr. Feedwell devoted to metaphysics ; and at the end of it ascertained beyond a doubt, that all women like white sauces better than brown,—and what were the discoveries of Locke, Newton, or Galileo, to this ? At the conclusion of this period, Mr. Herbert Grimstone went chargé-d'affaires to a German court, and took Mr. Frederick Feedwell with him as a sort of double, and by stuffing him into one of his own king's-button coats, made him useful in returning visits, and personating him where he was not known. Here Frederick became a great man, passing himself off as one of the legitimate Feedwells, whose name is a *passe par tout*, and doing all the mischief he possibly could,

setting wife against husband, husband against wife, parent against child, and child against parent, in every house to which he had the *entré*.

It at length became known to him that his absence would oblige; and he returned to England, fortunately for himself, just on the first flush of the pauper parliaments, when he became member for Colchester, for six weeks, and evinced his zeal for the local interests of the Borough he had the honour to represent, by devouring incredible quantities of the "Natives!" The best way of attaining a popular carriage, he thought, was to be constantly seen upon the top of the mail, between London and Colchester, where he hit upon a plan for advertizing his senatorial honours, that Mr. Rowland, of Macassar oil celebrity, might have envied; which was, whenever the coach stopped to change horses, crying out, "Any one here want a frank? I shall be m-m-m-most happy to give them one." In his maiden speech he immortalized himself by combining a disparity of purpose and opinion perfectly unheard of in parliamentary annals; the debate was on the third reading of the Reform Bill, which was then at the crisis of its struggle.

Mr. Frederick Feedwell rose, and looking round the house with the air of a Hampden, addressed the speaker as follows :—

“ Sir, I differ *in toto* from the honourable member for ———, who has just sat down ; I also totally disapprove of every single clause in this Bill from first to last ; but, nevertheless, I shall make it a point to v-v-v-vote for it : ”—in vain the Speaker cried “ Order, order,” the house was convulsed with laughter, and Mr. Frederick Feedwell rushed out of it, declaring that a man’s best friends were always jealous of him the moment he did anything better or greater than themselves ! It was impossible to know Mr. Frederick Feedwell, and not be reminded of Monsieur Fumlo’s epigram every time one looked at him.

“ Qu’il est heureux ce cher Monsieur Dorval,
Il s’aime, et n’a point de rival ! ”

In point of agreeability, his whole stock-in-trade consisted of two anecdotes ; the one *à propos*, or sometimes *à propos des bottes*, to religion, Sunday-schools, or a mother hearing her child its catechism, which was as follows, and always prefaced with “ Oh, yes, there is nothing like

r-r-r-religion; you know the clergyman who was q-q-q-questioning a young girl from the catechism of Heidelberg, and put the first question, ‘What is your only consolation in life and in death?’ the girl r-r-refused for some time to answer; but when the priest insisted, she said, ‘Well, then, since you m-m-m-must know, it is the young shoe-maker in Agneau Street!’” and, to add zest to these charming little *morceaux*, he had a trick of jerking the two fore-fingers of his right hand above his head, at the conclusion of each of them. The other he always brought out at dinner, *à propos* to any one’s aspersing the cook’s reputation, by adding pepper or salt to what they were eating; the proem to this was invariably “I have no snuff, my dear fellow,” with a shrug of the shoulders, to which the natural reply was, with a look of surprise, “Snuff! I did not ask for snuff.” “N-n-n-no, my dear fellow; but I never can see any one deluge a thing with pepper, without thinking of the story of Kant’s friend asking him to dinner one day at the table d’hôte at Königsberg, when a dish of vegetables being placed before a man who sat opposite to Kant,

he immediately emptied the whole contents of the pepper-box into it, saying, 'I am exceedingly fond of this dish well peppered.' 'And I,' said Kant, spilling the whole contents of his snuff-box again over the pepper, 'am exceedingly fond of it with plenty of snuff!' "

Such were the group assembled, when Cheveley entered. Mr. Fonnoir was holding forth upon Lord Denham's present position and future prospects; Mr. Spoonbill was listening most attentively to all he uttered thereupon; Fuzboz was exclaiming, "How very true that is," to every "if" or "but" that fell from Mr. Fonnoir; and Mr. Frederick Feedwell was coaxing down his nose with his left hand, while with his right he unbuttoned the two first buttons of his waistcoat. From Lord Denham they got to Lord De Clifford.

"I wonder," said Mr. Fonnoir, "that the ministry does not do something for De Clifford."

"Yes, he's been of great use to them, I believe," replied Mr. Spoonbill.

"He's amazingly clever," interposed Fuzboz.

"A shocking brute to his wife, though, is he not?" inquired Mr. Spoonbill.

“ Oh, who care’s for that?” pshawed Fuzboz, contemptuously: here Lord Cheveley raised his eyes, and if looks could consume, the enlightened Fuzboz would have been reduced to ashes.

“ To my own knowledge, I’ve seen her very provoking to him,” said Mr. Fonnoir.

Cheveley actually writhed; and nothing but the conviction of the injury it would do Lady De Clifford, kept him from reducing Mr. Fonnoir’s perpendicular to a horizontal position on the spot.

“ Ah, but you don’t know what previous provocation he may have given her,” premised the good-natured Spoonbill.

Cheveley came to a secret resolution of making his acquaintance the first opportunity.

“ But what business have women to be provoked?” fiated Mr. Fonnoir, with his short, husky, satyr laugh.

Mr. Frederick Feedwell, who had been hitherto silent, for fear of impeding the progress of his digestion, now observed, as he turned his large blue saucer eyes full upon the mirror,—

“ I think he is very j-j-j-jealous of her.”

“ Well, I should say, there never was a man less so,” said Fonnoir.

“ Decidedly,” echoed Fuzboz.

“ Ah,” said Mr. Frederick Feedwell, with a shrug and a jirk of the two fore-fingers of his right hand in alto, “ I dare say, y-y-y-you have no reason to think him so; b-b-b-but I judge from what I saw when *I* was staying in the house.”

“ Well,” said Spoonbill, “ I must say I never heard a breath against Lady De Clifford; so he surely can have no cause for his jealousy.”

“ Women,” replied Mr. Frederick Feedwell, casting another look of proud devotion at the glass, “ have sometimes great temptation thrown in their way, and then every allowance must be m-m-m-made for them.”

“ Why, hang it, Feedwell,” laughed Mr. Spoonbill, contemptuously; “ come, come, don’t try to make us believe that their temptations, like those of St. Anthony, sometimes consist of prodigious bores (boars); it won’t do, my good fellow, it won’t do, the *prima facie* evidence is against you.”

It was a fortunate circumstance for Mr. Fred-

rick Feedwell's personal comfort, that the words "Viscountess De Clifford" caught Cheveley's eye, in a paragraph in the Morning Post, at the time of his compassionate speech with regard to the temptations women are sometimes exposed to, or a *coup de pied* might have given the *coup de grâce* to his assertion; the paragraph was as follows.

"Viscountess De Clifford. We regret to state that this aimable and distinguished lady, now lies dangerously ill at Venice."

Cheveley read no more, the letters swam before him, the room whirled round with him, and had Mr. Frederick Feedwell roundly declared that all Lady De Clifford's unhappiness arose from a hopeless attachment to his own matchless self, he would not have heard him as he left the room and rushed down stairs; for swift as lightning he had taken the resolution of going to Mr. Neville's house, and ascertaining the truth of the paragraph he had just read. In his way into the street, he nearly jammed to death an unfortunate half-evaporated looking man, who was coming to the Athenæum for "change of dulness," to finish an article for the Westminster

Review, as he let the spring doors swing out of his hand and close upon the new arrival ; and upon gaining the street he was walking hastily on, when his servant followed him with an "I beg your pardon, my lord, but the carriage is here."

"Eh, what, yes, but I don't want it, I'll walk home," stammered Cheveley.

"If you please, my lord, it is snowing hard," remonstrated the footman.

However, whether Cheveley pleased it or not, the snow, impelled by a north-east wind, came drifting fast in his face, but as he persisted in his intention of walking home, the knight of the shoulder-knot was obliged to retire, and philosophically getting into the carriage himself, shut up the steps as he best could, and having, prior to drawing up the window, called out "home" in his usual sonorous voice, he threw himself back in the carriage, and came to the conclusion that any man walking on such a night who had a carriage at his disposal, must be mad ; and thought what a much better Marquis he would have made than his master. Intensely cold as the night was, Cheveley was in a perfect fever by the time he reached Berkeley-square, as

he had walked there from Pall Mall in less than ten minutes, and it was not until he had turned into the square from Bruton-street, that he stopped and remembered that he neither knew the number, nor on which side of the square Mr. Neville's house was; as Gunter's door was still open, and a light gleamed from the shutters, he was on the point of turning in there to ask, when the fear of being recognized deterred him. While he was deliberating as to how he should gain this necessary piece of information, a policeman passed, and his doubts were at once solved.

"Can you tell me," said Cheveley, "what number Mr. Neville lives at in this square."

"Mr. Neville's house, sir," said the man civilly and, pointing to it with his stick as he spoke, "is No. — on the opposite side of the square, nearly the centre house."

Cheveley thanked him, and hurried on; upon arriving at the door, his heart beat so violently, that he had not courage to knock, and as he leant for a moment against the railing, an apothecary's boy, with a covered basket came up, and selecting a packet from it, gave a sharp ring at the bell, the door was opened, the medicine

given in, and the servant about to shut it again, when Cheveley advanced,—

“Pray,” said he, making a strong effort to speak calmly, and without embarrassment, “can you tell me where Lady De Clifford is now? for I want to forward a parcel to her?” luckily for Cheveley there was no light in the outer hall, and that from the inner was not sufficiently brilliant to discover his pale and agitated face.

“She is somewhere abroad, I know, sir,” replied the footman, “but where, I cannot exactly say, for I have not been very long here; but I will call the butler, and he will be able to give you every particular;” and the man went to do so; but returning from the inner door, added, “I beg your pardon, sir, won’t you walk into the dining-room, it is so cold standing here?” Cheveley at first declined, upon the plea of disturbing the family, but upon the footman’s hospitably negating the supposition, by an assurance that there was no nobody there, as “Master was ill in bed, and Missus was reading to him;” the temptation of entering the house in which Julia had played as a child, was too great to resist, and he followed the servant in silence

into the dining-room, where the man placed a chair, stirred up the fire, lighted candles, and left him, while he went in quest of the butler.

The room being hung with pictures, it was not to be supposed Cheveley would remain there without looking at them, for he felt there was one of Julia's among them; so he took one of the candles, and began to explore. The first that met his view, was one of Lawrence's early beauties, disfigured in a white muslin window curtain, three inches of waist, shift sleeves looped up with a cord, the remainder of the white curtain rolled round the head, hair coming through, or rather tumbling out at the top, yellow pointed slippers, and a parasol (turned back, like those which have now come into fashion again,) lying on the grass. Such were the details of a picture, which nevertheless had one of those angel faces, which only Lawrence could perpetuate, and which from its strong likeness to Fanny Neville, Cheveley concluded to be her mother; except Lady De Clifford's, he had never seen such exquisitely beautiful hands and arms, those unmistakable quarterings of nature's heraldry; and who but Lawrence ever succeeded in infusing into canvas, that pure

patrician blood, that seems to flow like milk of roses through the delicately pencilled veins. He passed on, and soon came to another portrait by the same artist;—but oh ! how different, it was a portrait of Julia and Fanny, about the ages of twelve and sixteen, and one of Lawrence's latest and happiest efforts ; the composition of the picture, like that of all his later ones, was charming. Fanny was sitting beneath a large tree on a green knoll, with a quantity of wild flowers and reeds beside her. Julia was half lying at her feet, her elbow resting on her sister's knee, and her head thrown back as it rested on one hand ; in the other was a book, in which she was evidently absorbed, while in her lap slept a beautiful but lazy little Blenheim ; so intent did Julia seem upon what she was reading, that she did not appear to be aware of the Ophelia sort of decorations the mischievous Fanny was placing in her hair, or even of the close vicinity of a portly velvet looking bee, who no doubt mistook the lovely faces round which he was hovering, for living flowers ; in the back-ground of the picture, cattle were watering in a lake, while in the fore-ground

were some deer, one of which stood with a fore paw up, as though he every moment expected to hear the sunbeam that was darting into his scarcely less brilliant eyes; the whole picture had a sultry dreaminess about it, that made one almost fancy one heard that low music of the summer air, the hum of insects. Opposite to this picture, Cheveley stood transfixed, with a thousand conflicting and overwhelming feelings; but with the infatuation of a genuine lover, the idea in his own mind was clearly defined, that the original, with an accumulation of years and sorrow, (with a woman are they not synonymous?) was ten times more beautiful now, than she had been then, with the bloom and halo of youth and happiness around her. "Ah!" thought he, "had we but met then, or had we never met! Yet no, I would rather be the miserable hopeless wretch I am, than never have known you."

So abstracted was he by this train of reflection, that the old butler had entered, cast a furtive glance at the sideboard, to see whether any plate had by accident been left there, and hemmed twice without Lord Cheveley's hearing or perceiving him; but a more than usual potation

of port having rendered the worthy Mr. Clinton (a domestic fixture of more than thirty years,) rather averse from unnecessary standing, he at length, after taking ocular dimensions of Cheveley from head to foot, and deciding in his own mind that he certainly *was* a gentleman, as the footman had reported, hemmed still louder, and boldly accosted him with "I beg your pardon, sir, but I understood you wanted to know Lady De Clifford's address?"

Not having heard Clinton's foot on the old Axminster carpet, before he heard his voice, Cheveley was so startled, that he nearly let the candle fall out of his hand, but recovering his presence of mind, he said, "Oh yes, I am sorry to have given you the trouble of coming."

"No trouble, sir," interrupted Clinton.

"But can you tell me where a parcel would find Lady De Clifford?"

"The best place, sir, would be to leave it here, or at my lord's house in Grosvenor-street, as if sent abroad it might miscarry, as they are at present on their way home."

"Indeed!" said Cheveley, "I understood that Lady De Clifford was dangerously ill at Venice?"

“Her ladyship had been very ill there, sir,” replied Clinton, “but I am happy to say the last letters from Miss Neville were from Naples, and stated that my lady was sufficiently recovered to drive out, and that the family were to be in England by the end of January.”

“Thank God!” thought Cheveley, and a burning weight felt removed from his heart.

Seeing the change that came over Cheveley’s face, the old butler could not help risking the question of, “you know the ladies then, sir?”

“Yes I have that pleasure.”

“You may well call it that, sir,” said the old man wiping his eyes, “I have known them since they were born, and better or more amiable ladies never lived; as for her ladyship she is a perfect angel, or she could not bear all she does poor thing,” added he with a deep sigh, for which Cheveley began to think he himself was bordering on the angelic tribe; but having no farther excuse for prolonging his stay, he again thanked the old man, and prepared to depart.

“Will you favour me with your name, sir?” said Clinton, with increased curiosity, as he fol-

lowed him into the hall, "that I may let the ladies know who was inquiring for them?"

"Oh it is of no consequence," said Cheveley, hurrying to the door, "as they will be in England so soon. I will call again when they arrive."

"Humph, a lover of Miss Fanny's, no doubt," thought the old man, as he cast a last glance at the young Marquis's handsome face and distinguished figure, "and certainly she will get a better bargain than poor Miss Julia."

Cheveley, on his return home, was too much excited to sleep: now that he had ascertained beyond a doubt, that Julia was out of danger, his heart and his vanity, (I fear with the best men they are closely allied), were both satisfied at her having been ill, for he knew from experience, that suffering is the only genuine ovation Absence can offer to Love!

CHAPTER III.

“To curtain her sleepy world. Yon gentle hills,
 Robed in a garment of untrodden snow;
 Yon darksome rocks, whence icicles depend,
 So stainless that their white glittering spires
 Tinge not the moon’s pure beams; yon castled steep,
 Whose banner hangeth o’er the time-worn tower
 So idly, that rapt fancy deemeth it
 A metaphor of peace,—all form a scene
 Where musing solitude might love to lift
 Here soul above this sphere of earthliness.”—*P. B. Shelley.*

“La foi, se réveillant comme un doux souvenir,
 Jette un rayon d’espoir sur mon pâle avenir,
 Sous l’ ombre de la mort me ranime et m’enflamme,
 Et rend à mes vieux jours la jeunesse de l’âme.”

De la Martine.

It is hard to say which is the most ridiculous: pretensions to talent, without common capacity: or pretensions to beauty after time has long presented his *trousseau* of wrinkles, and crowsfeet?—having taken upon each an usurious per centage of bloom and dimples!—*A thought that often suggested itself to me when in London.*

THERE can be no doubt that external objects, and extraneous circumstances, are the

“Masters of passion, swayes it to the moode
 Of what it likes or loathes:”

therefore is it, that love being an imaginative passion, the rough and harsher realities of life,

which require all our energies to meet and to wrestle with, invariably reduce it to a degree of subordination, that change it from a tyrant to a slave :—whereas idleness is the cradle of love, luxury its nurse, and liberty its tutor ;—indulged and encouraged by these, it becomes almost insupportable, as it surfeits on its own fantasies ; for as Chaucer hath it,—

“ If love be searched well, and sought,
It is the sickness of the thought.”

And this sickness it is which blights and mildews every other wholesome blessing by which we are surrounded ; making us feel, like Rasselas in the Happy Valley, that there is still an aching void, a something wanting ; which vacuum, all the surrounding beauty and sunshine only renders the more apparent : and it was with this “ sickness of the thought,” that Lord Cheveley was oppressed, as he drove into his princely domain ; the village bells ringing a merry peal, and bonfires gleaming from all the adjacent hills.

From the lodge to the house, (a distance of about a mile and a half, through a wood), all the tenantry had assembled, and erected triumphal arches of evergreens, and such flowers as the season afforded. Cold as the weather was, all the young girls being dressed in white, and ranged on one side, gave a pretty and picturesque

effect to the scene. Luckily for Cheveley, the shouts of the people were so deafening, as they took the horses from the carriage, that it saved him the trouble of saying, or doing anything, but bowing right and left, with his hands pressed to his bosom; the more especially as the two gentlemen in the rumble condescendingly waved their hats, and gave cheer for cheer with the peasantry; while Mr. Sanford, in another post-chariot behind, went farther still; by not only bowing almost as affably as his master, but applying his white pocket handkerchief to his eyes every time he did so; and occasionally leaning his head pensively against a guncase that occupied the front of the carriage.

The house, or rather castle at Cheveley, was built in the time of Stephen; and closely resembled the castle of Old Sarum, except that it was larger; but like it, was inclosed within: the same low circular turreted wall; the entrance to which, was by a large massy black iron gate, studded with large spiked nails, except about a quarter of a yard square on one side; where was a cross-barred iron grate, like those of a prison, or convent door: within this gate was a paved amphitheatre, in a mosaic of long bugle-shaped stones, leading up to the castle; between every third turret of this low round wall, a cannon

was placed: and on the ground underneath each cannon, a pyramid of balls; from the centre of the wall on each side, branched two immensely wide flights of flat stone steps, with stone balustrades, so wide and flat, that two persons might with ease have walked down them abreast; these steps inclined gradually to a half circle, towards the back of the castle, terminating at the first terrace with most delicious gardens, laid out in the old Italian style, with colonnades of thick green bosquets, fountains, aviaries, square fish-ponds, labyrinths, and terrace above terrace; at the foot of these gardens, which occupied a perpendicular mile, was the most lovely valley that could be imagined, through which flowed a bright, babbling, dimpling stream: there was something child-like and joyous in the way this little brook dashed its crystal spray against the dull, stiff, old maidish-looking stones, and then darted swiftly onward, as though afraid of their retaliating. This valley was full of cattle, and surrounded by hills or rather rocks, covered with arbutus and larch; and on one side of it was a grove of linden trees, about three-quarters of a mile in length, and terminated by a park-paling, which led into a deer park, celebrated for the beauty of its timber and the wildness of its fern. In the linden

grove was a mausoleum erected to Lady Lucy Mowbray, Lord Cheveley's mother, who had made it a particular request that she might not be buried in the family vault. So sheltered was this beautiful spot, that the flowers with which it was embellished, bloomed all the year round, and the soft blush of the Persian rose, mingled with

“The coy Anemone, that ne’er uncloses
Her lips, until they’re blown on by the wind.”*

And above all, breathed out the sweet and faithful wallflower, to which Treneuil has said, in his beautiful lines,—

“Triomphe sans rivale, et que ta sainte fleur
Croisse pour le tombeau, le trône, et le malheur.”

The whole place gave one not the idea of death, but of the shaded sleep of the blest, that precedes their waking in eternal light !

Above the terraced gardens rose the castle itself, like a diadem of coronetted turrets, closely resembling (as I have before stated) the castle of Old Sarum in King Stephen's time.

When Cheveley entered the low armoury that formed the hall, and had received and returned the salutations of some fifty domestics, and intimated to Mr. Marshall, the steward, that he would retain them all in their different stations,

* H. Smith.

he repaired to the library : it was the last room he had been in, when as a boy, his mother had been sent for to take him away, for having disturbed his uncle's political musings, by an ill-timed game of battledore and shuttlecock ;—and, certainly, politics apart, no room could be worse adapted for such an amusement, it being “cumbered o'er with carving.” Old as the building was, this room, at the expense of a whole wing, had been converted into a lofty gallery : the ceiling was that of a cathedral, between all the interstices of which were emblazoned the Cheveley arms, while from the spiral roses, at equal distances, hung large silver lamps, like those used in foreign churches, each burner being in the form of the old Greek lamp. The room itself was wainscotted with old black oak, arabesqued with gold of an arras pattern ; the books only occupied one side of the room, and were divided by stalls of carved oak ; in each recess of which were crimson velvet seats, and over each stall was a bust. Down the opposite side of the room were four-and-twenty colossal statues, in carved wood, of the early church reformers and martyrs, which the late lord had many years before brought from Holland : they were in the Michael Angelo style, and for strength and expression could not have been

excelled by him. In the panels at this side of the room were inserted portraits and historical pictures: here and there was an ancestor perpetuated by Holbein, in all the dignity of forked beards, jewelled vest, and lace ruffs. The historical pictures were very large, and only four in number: the subject of one was Henry the Eighth passing from his closet through a group of courtiers, and frowning at Cardinal Wolsey, thinking he had not yet set out for Calais, while the Cardinal was kneeling to present the despatches he had brought back; the expression of the king's face was so skilfully managed, that one almost fancied one saw it change from displeasure to delighted surprise. The second was King John signing the Magna Charta: the mingled looks of anxiety, resolution, and defiance, in the countenances of the barons, was very fine, and the hand of the contemptible monarch seemed to tremble beneath it. The subject of the third picture was the marriage of Elizabeth of France, daughter of Henry the Second, to Philip the Second of Spain. The Bishop of Paris, according to the custom of 1559, was performing the marriage ceremony at the door of the church of Nôtre Dame. This was altogether a curious picture, done on three separate panels; and the demure

look of the bride, the indifferent look of the bridegroom, the mechanical look of the bishop, the ‘*comme de raison*’ look of Henry the Second, the open mouths of the assembled crowd, and the perpendicular sleep of a little dog, that sat on Elizabeth’s train, formed a perfect mosaic of negatives. The fourth and last was somewhat of a daub, and not a very interesting subject ;—it was Prince Edward, son of Henry the Third, making the soldiers of Simon De Montford, Earl of Leicester, ride races, in order to escape from them. But over the high old carved chimney-piece was a ‘right merrie’ picture of Ben Jonson carousing at the Mermaid, with Shakspeare, Herrick, and Howel; they were seated round a table covered with dropsical looking flasks, with long narrow necks, and ample glasses, with tall stems.

“The rare arch poet”

presided in a chair rather higher than the rest, with flushed face, and collar somewhat awry, as though sack and sherries had done their office. James Howel had his eyes filially turned away from his poetical sire’s excesses, upon a quaint-looking old book, in a dilapidated cover. Not so Herrick; he seemed to think that the true source of inspiration was to be derived from seeing Ben

“Grow deeply and divinely drunk :”

while the then undeified "Will," being but of small note among them, was peering upward over his high-backed chair, as he bestowed sundry ocular civilities upon a 'sweet Anne Page' looking damsel, in a pointed hat and snow-white ruff, who was enacting the part of Hebe to these choice spirits. In the window hung a magpie's cage; and through the narrow panes from the outside peeped Martin Donne and Alleyne the player, the latter twitching Donne's cloak, and pointing archly to Shakspeare. There was a life in this picture that made one listen breathlessly to hear their mirth, till one turned with a sigh to the quotation from Herrick's ode, in gilt old English letters beneath it, and asked with him—

"Ah ! Ben,
Say how or when
Shall we thy guests
Meet at those lyric feasts
Made at the Sun,
The Dog, the Triple Tun ;
Where we such clusters had,
As made us nobly wild, not mad ?
And yet each verse of thine
Outdid the meat, outdid the frolic wine !"

This room, or rather gallery, terminated in one large deep mullion window, which overlooked the terraced gardens, while a door on

the right side of the window opened into an orangery, of immense extent,

“And cheated churlish winter with sweet summer airs;” thus creating that perfect luxury, which is formed by gothic magnificence combined with modern comfort. Cheveley sighed as he looked round this, to him, splendid banishment: there was the old high-backed pointed Henry the Seventh’s chair, that he had last seen his poor uncle in, the morning he had been expelled; there, too, were the bootekins he had so often stumbled over, and the reading table, which in those days he had hated, as an altar to Tacita; for never dare he either move or speak when it was drawn to the fire; and with these mementoes, the recollection of the

“Smiles, the tears, of boyhood’s years,”

crowded thick and fast upon him: but soon his thoughts reverted to Julia, and his heart yearned to exchange the splendid halls of his fathers, for the large, dingy, comfortless rooms of Il Leone Bianco at Venice. “Ah!” thought he, “were she but mistress of this place, I could understand what people meant by calling it charming; but as it is, there is a gloom and desolation about it that is to me perfectly insupportable.” As if Nature herself were angry at so unjust an aspersion, a flood of golden light from the setting sun

at this moment streamed through the illuminated window, and made the whole gallery gorgeous with its prismatic colours. Cheveley walked to the window: the gardens, with their green terraces and bosquets, even at that bare season, were lovely, and the snow-capped hills in the distance looked like so many white-veiled vestals doing homage to the departing god of day.

Nature never appeals in vain, even to the most wretched. The door of the orangery was open: Cheveley walked through it to the gardens; the air was redolent of orange blossoms and magnolias from a neighbouring hot-house; this recalled to him his mother's love of flowers in general, and these flowers in particular, and his heart was in his eyes, as he mechanically bent his steps towards her grave, in the grove of lindens. He paused when he came to the little brook, and stood and listened to it, for it spoke to him of other days: on its margin how often had he played, while his mother had sat reading under a large hospitable tree, now leafless, but bright with the setting sun, which, like an eastern monarch, was sinking into his bed of gold, while the silver crescent of the young moon had risen in the clear cold sky to take his place. "Yes, the tree is there still," said he, thinking aloud, "but where is she now? *there*,

if ever mortal was," added Cheveley, as he raised his eyes to heaven, where the pale gentle-looking moon shone out like an emblem of purity and peace. A herd coming to water the cattle, he walked on, and turned down the avenue of lindens. How subjugating, yet exalting, are the feelings with which the graves of those we love inspire us; there our dust suffers, till it seems brought as low as theirs. We weep, we struggle, we upbraid our mother earth, but there also we pray, till our spirit soars to God, and to theirs. There is a turbulence in sin that we feel would disturb their eternal rest, and as our thoughts bear our hearts upward, we resolve to renounce it, for the passions' sleep, when conscience awakes, and amid the silence of death we distinctly hear "her still, small voice;" but, alas, back in the busy world again, among its turmoils and its temptations, she in her turn sleeps, and the counsel we took with the sainted dead is forgotten or weakened by the aggressions and example of the living. Many were the tears that Cheveley shed at his mother's grave, although it was six years since her death; and, with the true waywardness of sorrow, at one moment he thanked God that she was spared the knowledge of all his present sufferings, while the next he wished her back

on earth to cheer and to console him; and yet she could not have done either, for, albeit, unlike Lord De Clifford's mother, he dared not have made her the confidant of the unhallowed love that was consuming him; or if he had, he would have received neither consolation nor encouragement. So long had he lingered in the grove of lindens, that it was nearly eight o'clock when he returned to the castle, where his solitary dinner awaited him; it was almost an unnecessary ceremony his sitting down to it, for eat he could not. The dining-room looked into the park; he undrew the window curtain, and sat in the window, listening abstractedly to the noise of the deer beneath it. His thoughts, from habit, flew back to Venice, then again they reverted to his mother: he saw her as he had seen her last; her parting "God bless you" rang in his ear, and he became involved in a thousand metaphysical speculations, as he gazed upon the skies, and read

"The gospel of the stars, great nature's holy writ;" and who ever did so without longing to be as one of them, far from this dull earth, a light with God in heaven? At length Cheveley rose, and returned to the library. "I will try and read," said he; and accordingly he took down one book after another, but his thoughts wan-

dered, and by the time he got to the end of a page he did not know one word that was in it. He took up a pen to write to Saville, when he recollected that he would be in England before the letter could reach him; but out of the fulness of the heart, the pen, as well as the mouth, speaketh, and he wrote the following lines:—

Near where the bee-loved lindens* fling
Their deep and odorous shade,
And the first roses of the spring
Blush through the emerald glade.

There dost thou sleep, sweet mother, mine;
And as calmly, purely bright
Be every joy that now is thine,
As thou wert to my mortal sight.¹

No more! no more! this heart can feel,
As when erst thy dove-like voice
Would o'er its troubled waters steal
With fresh hopes that said "rejoice!"

But then the love I felt was bliss,
For 'twas love of God and thee;
Now 'tis a deep and dark abyss
Of sin, grief, and misery;

Of sin wrought through angelic power,
As when of old, daughters of earth
Saw in a bright, but fatal hour,
Fair forms of heavenly birth.

* See Virgil's beautiful description of the industrious corycian, where he notices the love of bees for the flower of the linden or lime tree.

And tempting angels from their sphere
Turned to guilt seraphic love,
Which made them hopeless wanderers here,
And branded exiles from above.

Yet mother ! gentle mother ! no,
All *thy* love has not been lost ;
Guilt has not wreck'd, tho' passion's flow
Leaves my spirit tempest tost.

For how can I forget the care
That you lavish'd on my youth ?
The morning walk, the evening prayer,
Then the kiss for telling truth !

Still do I see thee, as of old,
Reading 'neath some fav'rite tree,
Old Spenser's page, of green and gold,
Stereotyped in Fäerie.

While Dash, and Bell, and I, would play,
And roll on the velvet green,
With noise enough to scare away
The moth-wing'd " Fäerie Queen."

Till lured back by thy gentle call,
(Ah ! 'twas never heard in vain),
The panting dogs, spoilt boy, and all,
First were chid, then kiss'd again.

The very daisy chains you twined,
Then to keep your urchin still,
Doth yet his wayward spirit bind,
Now to do what *was* your will.

I often think perchance the dead,
Silent vigils o'er us keep,
And, by them we're safely led
Through paths o'er which we vainly weep.

Yet, again, I've ask'd, in hallow'd ground,
Their dust beneath, their souls above us,
'Mid the immortal joys they've found,
If still they know, if still they love us ?

About a fortnight after Cheveley had been in the country, he went over to Campfield to dine at Lord Sudbury's, who at the time had the house filled with Christmas guests. Lord Sudbury was a good little man in his way, for he never got in any one else's way,—and that in this world is a virtue. Nature and chance had certainly had a difference of opinion about him, as the former had decided that he should not be one of her nobility, while the latter decreed that he should be one of ours. In person he was short, and what the common Irish expressively term *unsignified*, being something between an English hair-dresser's apprentice, and the garçon of a French café; but he never did any harm, as far as a man can be said to be guiltless of it, who never does any good. Her ladyship was called among her own clique a 'very superior woman,' for her personal attractions never jostled any one's, having a face like one of Don Quixote's unavailing regrets, and a figure long and heavy as one of Sancho's slumbers; add to which, there was a deep cerulean tinge in her character, that propelled her into reading scientific books that she did not understand, and talking of them afterwards. She was a great admirer of what the world stuccoes with the name of 'talent'—that is, provided Fame had

stamped the ore as current ; for, as to playing the Columbus to any one's mind, that was beyond her—as, indeed, it is beyond most women ; for they generally see with other people's eyes, hear with other people's ears, decide with other people's judgment, and parrot forth other people's opinions.

When Lord Cheveley arrived, the assembled group consisted of the Duke and Duchess of Darlington. The Duchess was a handsome blonde, always dressed to perfection, with a very sweet countenance, and gentle manner. The Duke—was a Duke, and what more need any man be ? As he had never done any one any harm, I would fain say nothing against him ; but truth compels me to own that he was a Whig. Yet, for that matter, so is the Duke of Devonshire ; and every one who knows him, likes and esteems him with reason ; and as for his politics, they only prove that the best are liable to error, and that there is nothing perfect in this best of all possible worlds. Though Lord Sudbury was an ultra Tory, Christmas, like death, levelled all distinctions at Campfield ; so that at the moment of Cheveley's entrée, Mr. Spoonbill had full possession of Mr. Tom Dareall's button, the Radical member for one of the metropolitan boroughs, discussing the

eternal subject of Lord Denham, and little dreaming how scurvily his dear friends the Whigs were actually using him, or the disgraceful exposé that a few months would make.

Mr. Tom Dareall was most popular both among the ladies and the Levites, and was a perfect Sheridan in his management of those intricate and troublesome human burrs called creditors. His toilette was always unexceptionable, and his turn-out exceedingly clever, as he generally *drove duns* :—in short, he was one of those men who had never been, and would never at any epoch of his life be called ‘Mister.’ Even in the mouths of young ladies he was ‘Tom Dareall,’ being a favourite with every one except Mr. Herbert Grimstone, whom he had once ousted at Triverton.

On an ottoman sat Lord St. Leger, a young man of moderate capacity, and immoderate fortune, who was thought literary by the young ladies in Belgrave Square and May Fair, from the fact of his having contributed a little inanity to ‘the Book of Beauty,’ and divers annuals, which had been duly lauded in the ‘Investigator’ and other impartial and independent papers, as being “exceedingly graceful, and evincing much genuine talent.” Being one of the best ‘parties’ in England, he was now sur-

rounded by a group of young ladies, who laughed at, and admired every thing he said, as though he had talked diamonds and pearls. But hunger will make the brightest and lightest spirit philosophical and reflective; so his lordship, with a yawn, hazarded the very novel remark, of how long and stupid the half hour before dinner always appeared!—upon which, with an invulnerable vanity, which did them great credit, inasmuch as that it was not in the least wounded at this ungallant speech, the first young lady said, in a stage whisper, to her companions behind his lordship, which resounded from the three other young ladies, like the triple echo at Killarney, “What a clever creature he is!” “And so handsome!” added the first speaker, who had been out six years, and was dressing, and growing younger in consequence. Lord St. Leger thought the half hour before dinner not so stupid, after all; and that Harriet Winterberry (the last speaker) “really was a very fine girl”—‘woman’ would have been the more appropriate term; but, as I have before said, his lordship was in the habit of writing for the *Annals*, and no doubt that made him imaginative; and certainly ‘girl’ was a more poetical word than ‘woman.’

In a priedieu, at a little distance from this

group, sat a little woman, with sharp features, and a sharper voice ; a tall man stood by her, leaning listlessly on the back of the priedieu, talking Greek to her, inasmuch as he was expatiating upon the thrilling interest, and masterly anatomy of human nature, in that most powerfully written and wonderful book, ‘ Oliver Twist.’

“ Never,” said he, “ did any book take such complete possession of me as that. Sleeping or waking, I had poor Oliver’s pale face still before me. I never asked a question, but it seemed answered with the Dodger’s antithetical ‘ Oh, no.’ My dreams were still darkened by the ruffian Sikes, or infected by the villainous old Jew ; and every pool I passed in the street, seemed to be red with poor Nancy’s blood :—in short,” concluded Mr. Vavasor, “ I would rather know Dickens than any living author ; for although he does occasionally write beautiful sentiments, that seem to evince deep feeling, yet I am convinced that he has a heart, and that it is in the right place.”

“ Why, of course,” replied the lady with the sharp voice, “ if he writes beautiful sentiments, that show deep feeling, that proves he has a heart. So, begging your pardon, Mr. Vavasor, though you may be a very clever man, I think you are talking great nonsense ; for how can people write feelings, if they haven’t them ?”

Mr. Vavasor smiled somewhat contemptuously at the lady's logic, and contented himself with repeating—"Yes, that 'Oliver Twist' is a wonderful book."

"Hem—I almost forget it—something about a boy in a workhouse, isn't it?" asked the sharp voice.

Mr. Vavasor changed the subject in despair, but hit upon one almost as bad, being more intellectual. "Have you seen Charles Kean's 'Hamlet?'—is it not perfect?"

Now the lady with the sharp voice, having no personal or individual *judgment*, was determined to compromise the matter, by always having an *opinion* of her own; and therefore replied, flatly,—

"Why, I don't think he's as wonderful as some of the papers say, or as bad as others say, there's always a medium, you know."

Mr. Vavasor removed himself to the other end of the room, and took refuge behind one of the county ladies, who sat fat and fidgetty on the edge of her chair, in a thick brocade gown and a profusion of blonde, (now that both are out of fashion,) not venturing to look to the right or the left, except when her husband, who stood near her, a portly man, in a blue coat with gilt buttons, and white waistcoat, occasionally

stooped down and whispered, "there, my dear, that's the duchess, sitting next her ladyship on the sofa," or, "I wonder how long it will be before we have dinner?"

Lady Sudbury and the Duchess of Darlington occupied one sofa, and between them sat a beautiful little Blenheim dog, of the name of Juan ; his large, black, eastern eyes, looking languidly round, as though he was bored to death, and wondered with Mr. Palmer, (the county gentleman) when dinner would be ready ; one paw rested on Lady Sudbury's soft green velvet dress, while she stroked one of his long silken Titian-like ears, and complained to the duchess of the dreadful headaches she had had lately.

"It's your mind, dear Lady Sudbury," said her grace, with a half smile, "you really study too much."

"Have you seen," inquired Lady Sudbury, modestly waiving the accusation, "have you seen this new American author, Mr. Snob-guess?"

"No," replied the duchess.

"Oh, you should see him," said Lady Sudbury, "for he is writing a book about England, and means to mention all the beauties ; but he is to be here to-day ; Lady Stepastray, who you

know has a perfect menagerie of lions always about her, is to bring him to dinner, and they stay till after Christmas ; I told her to tell him, that he must not be disappointed if he finds me very dull, for I have been suffering so much with my head lately."

While Lady Sudbury was still speaking, a page advanced, and when she had ceased, announced Lady Stepastray and Mr. Snobguess. The latter having been duly presented by the former, made his best Broadway bow, and said,

"I'm sorry, *my lady*, to hear that you've not been quite roight (right) about the head lately."

The duchess smiled ; Lady Sudbury looked notes of interrogation, and Mr. Rufus Snobguess came to a full stop, by seizing poor little Juan's unoccupied ear ; which piece of low-bred Yankee familiarity, naturally roused his Blenheim blood, and set him howling. Reader, hast ever seen a shepherdess worked in a sampler, looking down upon a pet lamb with a look of softness and vacuity, produced by the reflection of green silk grass, three inches below her eyes, studded with pink silk roses, waving one inch above her hat and crook ? if so, exert thy memory, to recall the vision ; this done, stretch thy imagination to the contemplation of the same shepherdess, evaporating on a bank of

primroses, and you will behold the intellectual and ethereal Lady Stepastray ; there was a feline gentleness in her ladyship's manner, a mewling softness in her ladyship's voice, that was perfectly entrapping. She had a graceful habit of crossing her left hand over her right wrist, and then drawing both in towards her chest, that gave a picturesque air to her whole figure ; between that of a Magdelene and a Morris-dancer. Some forty years ago, she had, through the medium of a Scotch divorce, dis-embarrassed herself of her first husband ; and so well had this severe discipline agreed with him, that he was still walking about and merry, long after the silent tomb had received his successor. An interesting youth, now about two-and-forty, was the result of her ladyship's first marriage ; but her feelings were of that refined and delicate nature, that she seldom saw him, and few had ever heard of him : whether it was the almost infantine simplicity of her thoughts that continued to impart such youth to her appearance, I cannot take upon me to say ; but certain it is, that it seemed as if she and Time had thrown for victory, and that she had decidedly won. Seeming to think that death was out of the question for her, she compromised the matter by dyeing her hair, and rejuvenating

her dress every year ; and though she had not entirely left off love, she had within the last ten years taken to literature, and written some charming works ; one called the “Chamberlain’s Daughter,” and another, the “Old Road to Ruin,” which, considering she had been going it for the last fifty years, she could not have possibly selected a subject with which she was more conversant ; having for a similar number of years thoroughly wormed herself, by falsehood, flattery, and accommodating conduct, into the good graces of every one, either in society, or literature, whom she thought worth toadying ; her plan being, like that of the illustrious Roman, who stood aloof on the top of the hill, till he saw which side victory favoured, to be neuter in all differences, conjugal or otherwise, till she saw which party was the strongest, and then join that. However, I’m sure this only arose from her love of being in the fashion ; for however kind one may have been to people, however great and continued the benefits one may have bestowed upon them, and however inordinate their expressions and professions of gratitude may be, let but misfortune come to us, and like a blot of ink, upon a fair transcript, it seems to obliterate everything. As I have never yet met with any one who had succeeded in reading her

ladyship's books, it may be interesting to people to know the style of her writings: this they may do through a very delightful medium, that of reading the ninth number of *Nicholas Nickleby*, as the "Chamberlain's Daughter," and the "Old Road to Ruin," were precisely in the same milk-and-water-run-mad school, of "The Lady Flabella;" that charming novel which Kate Nickleby read out to Mrs. Wititterly, and which that lady thought "so soft," while Kate, (a point in which most persons will be likely to agree with her,) thought it "very soft."

However, thanks to her dinners, and Fuzboz's good digestion and consequent gratitude, he had manufactured a charming biography of "this gifted lady," accompanied by a youthful portrait, for one of the magazines. In this interesting life, the first husband, and the old son, were both carefully suppressed, or rather lopped off, as useless excrescences with which the public had nothing to do; and then Fuzboz proceeded to inform them, that her ladyship's thirst for knowledge (that abstruse and metaphysical knowledge, beyond the capacity of most of her sex), had burst forth in uncontrollable force even from her earliest infancy; no wonder, then, that it had been quenched by such deep draughts from the "Pierean spring," when we consider

the length of time that had elapsed from that period up to the present. So that Fuzboz's concluding peroration, bidding the world wonder at, and admire the result of her ladyship's studies, was almost superfluous. At the advent of each succeeding work, (piece of work would be a more appropriate term, as they had always to be "done into English by several hands," as the poor publisher knew to his cost, though to do them into sense was a miracle beyond the power of modern times); well, at the advent of each succeeding work, Lady Stepastray was sure to possess herself of a classical gold ink-stand, or a costly jewelled pen, or sometimes both, which were paraded to the fashionable and literary world by turns, varying their history for each, as to authors, and authors' wives. It was "Look, my dear Mr. or Mrs. So and So, the dear Duke of —; (naming a royal duke), sent me these the other day, with such a pretty letter, thanking me for my book, and saying, that as no one made such good use of their pen, he must send me these implements for writing, in the hope of inducing me to write more; now it was so very prettily expressed you can't think!"—The lords and ladies heard the same story in their turn, with this difference, that the royal duke was changed to "the cele-

brated author of so and so ;” but this sometimes entailed another addition, as her auditor would exclaim—“ Dear Lady Stepastray, do show me the letter, for I should so like to see his handwriting :” whereupon, her ladyship was overpowered with a very natural confusion, and looking blush-ways, simpered out, “ Oh, I thought it looked so vain to keep it, that I burned it.”

In addition to being a great genius, Lady Stepastray was determined to grow into a young beauty, and it was curious to see the dexterity with which she contrived to give people notice of this, by wrapping up the fact in a pretended insult. Thus she would, *à propos de bottes*, say to some blooming beauty of nineteen, “ dear Lady Jane,” or Caroline, as the case might be, “ you are much too beautiful to go through this world without envy and ill-nature ; people are so ill-natured ; only think of Lady M. saying to me the other day, ‘ ah ! it’s all very fine, Lady Stepastray, but I’m certain the men would never read your books as they do, if you were not such a pretty woman !’ Now, so very ill-natured you know, because reviewers (with a great emphasis on the word) don’t care whether one is pretty or not ; but, the fact is, Lady M., being an authoress herself, is jealous of me !”

Another very ingenious device of Lady Step-

astray's, was silently to claim the authorship of every very clever book that came out anonymously: this she achieved by looking confused, or abruptly changing the subject, when the merits of the work were discussed; or if any one remarked—"it is evidently in so and so's style, and, after all, I think it must be theirs;" she would look down with a conscious smile, and murmur, "No, no, it is not Mr. B.'s or Mrs. G.'s, I have reason to know;" and then if laughingly taxed by her auditors, who knew full well she could not write such a book, with the authorship, she would playfully tap them on the wrist, and smilingly walk away, as she said, "What right have you to suppose it's mine? I have not owned it. Now pray don't go and say that I wrote it, for I—I mean the person who wrote it—I know wishes it to be kept a profound secret!"

Lady Stepastray, as soon as she had dulcified sufficiently with Lady Sudbury and the duchess, glided across the room, and professed herself overwhelmed with delight to see *dear* Lord Cheveley; and so far she was sincere, that she really was always rejoiced to see any one that was either great, or rich, or celebrated. Cheveley was truly grateful when dinner was announced, as it relieved him from the 'fadeurs'.

of Lady Stepastray, whose talk was about as piquante as cold veal, without salt. Lord Sudbury, having passed on with the Duchess of Darlington, and the Duke with Lady Sudbury, it became Cheveley's turn to offer his arm to Lady Florence Lindley, Lord Sudbury's sister, a handsome and agreeable woman, of about thirty, who seemed the only person unconscious of these two qualifications; the young ladies being distributed between Lord St. Leger, Tom Dareall, and Mr. Palmer, while Mrs. Palmer availed herself of the benefit of clergy, in the chaplain's left arm. Lady Stepastray fell to the lot of Mr. Spoonbill, and catching a glimpse of Mrs. Palmer athwart that gentleman's voluminous shirt-frill, had barely time to dole out a homœopathic dose of civility suited to a country gentleman's wife, in the form of a slight and distant bow, when she perceived her 'protégé,' Mr. Snobguess, towing himself after her.

"'Pon honour! *my lady*," said he, sidling up to her, "this *aint* treating us according to Hoyle though, neither; for I think there should be a lady to every gentleman."

"And so there is a lady to every *gentleman*," said Mr. Spoonbill, tartly, as he took a rapid survey of Mr. Snobguess's disjointed figure,

French-polished mangle-wurzel-looking face, and the lock of hair, enclosed in a square sarcophagus of pearls, that decorated his shirt.

“Mr. Spoonbill, Mr. Snobguess, the celebrated American author,” tittered Lady Stepastray, slightly pressing Mr. Spoonbill’s arm, as an admonition to be more civil.

“Yes, yes,” said Mr. Snobguess, winking his right eye, and wagging his head, without taking any further notice of the introduction,—“you’re provided for, fast enough, sir, and those may laugh that win.”

Upon entering the dining-room, Lady Stepastray contrived to place herself on one side of Lord Cheveley, while Mr. Spoonbill sat on her right hand; and, much to his annoyance, Mr. Snobguess planted himself on his right. But, with the best intentions in the world upon the part of Lady Stepastray, Lady Florence made herself so agreeable to Cheveley, as her chief conversation consisted in praising and asking questions about ‘dear’ Lady De Clifford, that poor Lady Stepastray was fain to content herself with “taste, Shakspear, high-life, the musical glasses,” and Mr. Spoonbill.

“Well!” said Mr. Snobguess, looking round the table, “if this aint for all the world like a Turkish bazaar.”

“How so?” simpered Lady Stepastray.

“Why, because there’s something of every *think*—there’s gold plate enough for half-a-dozen Delhi merchants: then the fruit growing, as it were, out of the table, and the meat, fish, poultry, and vegetables, that keep *continually* coming round, to say no*think* of the ladies, whom I guess are as much slaves in England as in Turkey, makes it *eg-zactly* a Turkish bazaar.”

“Yes—yes—what a very original idea!” said Lady Stepastray, crossing her hands, and looking admiringly up into Mr. Snobguess’s face; “I do hope you’ll put that in your book.”

“I’ll make a note of it, sure-*ly*,” replied Snobguess. But the word ‘book’ seemed to awaken some remembrance; for immediately after, he conveyed something from his coat-pocket under his napkin; and a sort of rumbling, rustling noise commenced, which excited Mr. Spoonbill’s curiosity. Ever and anon he cast a wistful glance towards Mr. Snobguess’s lap; at length he thought he perceived a small book!—and he did perceive one, for that very morning, preparatory to his visit to Campfield, Mr. Snobguess had expended a shilling upon a book called ‘Etiquette for Gentlemen!’ and, with an ingenuity peculiar to genius, he was now filling up the interstices of time by discussing

mutton and manners at one and the same moment.

Shortly after the discovery of the book, Mr. Spoonbill observed that Mr. Snobguess's head kept bobbing and ducking at a tremendous rate; —the fact was, the plateau was very large, as it consisted of a copy of the bronze horses at Monte Cavallo, and this intercepted his view of the people on the opposite side of the table, among whom was Lady Sudbury. But at length, catching a glimpse of her, he held up a wine-glass, against which he jingled a fork, the better to call attention, as he roared out, in a loud voice, "The pleasure of wine with you, *my lady*." It was with difficulty that every one suppressed their laughter, while Lady Sudbury seemed almost too much surprised to bow an acknowledgment of Mr. Snobguess's 'polite attention !' which he was about to extend to Lady Stepastray ; when Mr. Spoonbill turning to her at the same moment, to conceal his laughter, prevented her seeing or returning Mr. Snobguess's nod : whereupon he exclaimed theatrically, giving Mr. Spoonbill a dig in the side.

" ' You give me most egregious indignity.' "

At this, Mr. Spoonbill, who was half inclined to resent such undesired or deserved familiarity, turned quickly round ; but thinking better of it, answered from the same play—

“ ‘ Ay, with all my heart; and thou art worthy of it.’ ”

After this, Mr. Snobguess became too much interested in his dinner to talk any more; and the conversation between Lady Stepastray and Mr. Spoonbill turning upon pictures, and the latter happening to say he should much like to see a very fine Annibal Caracci that he understood had been recently added to the gallery at Cheveley Place, Lord Cheveley introduced himself by saying he should be happy to show it to him any day he would come over to Cheveley. Mr. Spoonbill thanked him, and as he did so, thought he had seen his face somewhere before, but had not the slightest suspicion that he was indebted to his defence of Lady De Clifford at the Athenæum for Lord Cheveley's evident good-will towards him. So little do any of us know the motives, or shades of motives, that actuate persons in society in their conduct towards us: often originating in ourselves, and taking their tone from the word or look we may have hazarded for or against them, at times and places long since forgotten by us.

In the evening, Lady Stepastray was determined to appropriate Lord Cheveley to herself; and when some of the party had sat down to

cards, and others had repaired to the music gallery, she seated herself beside him, and gracefully crossing her hands, as was her wont, mewed out a mingled lament and panegyric upon the late Lord Cheveley.

“Yes, yes, my dear Lord Cheveley,” she began, “your uncle died in such a thoroughbred way, so like a gentleman, as he had lived. Do you know he had been reading my book, ‘The Old Road to Ruin,’ and he said to his man, ‘Lounds, I have torn a leaf out of Lady Stepastray’s book : get it rebound ;’ and he sank back and died’

“I’m not surprised,” said Cheveley, with a mingled feeling of contempt and disgust, that made him order his carriage, as the servant took Lady Stepastray’s tea-cup.

The night was clear and cold, and the sky gemmed with stars, that looked brighter and farther from the earth than usual ; before he reached home, Cheveley had decided in his own mind that since his return to England he had only met two people worth knowing—Lady Florence Lindley and Mr. Spoonbill.

CHAPTER IV.

“ Parvum parva decent.”

“ Take an old woman and roast her well,
And baste her well with cheese,
And put her out of a frosty night, and ten to one but she’ll freeze;
Take her in the next morning,
And rub her down with straw,
And put her by the fireside, ’tis ten to one but she’ll thaw.”

Nursery Anthology.

“ Talking of age,” says one of our Sir Oracles, “ the longer women live the younger they grow. I know ladies who six years ago rated at thirty-five, and who now stand at twenty-nine. It is next to impossible for a woman to get over forty. This is the ‘ pons asinorum,’ at which the sex invariably stick. The only person I ever met with who confessed she had passed this barrier, was an old lady of eighty; but then her great-grandson was a lad of eighteen.”

It was towards the end of February; the De Cliffords had been in England about a month, and Fanny and Saville were to be married in a fortnight; after which time Lady De Clifford had received notice that she was to go down to Grimstone, for Lord De Clifford had entered into a new ‘ liaison.’ He seemed to have a predilection for governesses, for Mademoiselle D’Antoville’s successor was a Devonshire woman,

who had kept a school at Sidmouth; but what was exceedingly convenient, her brother was a low writer for the press, which while it secured puffing on the one hand, also guaranteed the suppression of all disagreeable truths on the other, and enabled Lord De Clifford to give whatever colouring he pleased to his own actions; besides, having many plans to organize prior to the next election, every day convinced him more and more of the expediency and truth of his exemplary parent's assertion, that he would be much freer and better living '*ong gor song*.' Owing to Fanny's marriage, he was unable to carry this point as soon as he could have wished, but the day after that event everything was arranged for Lady De Clifford's departure.

It was a cold gloomy morning in February; Lord De Clifford had been closeted for a long time in the library with Miles Datchet, who, at length, left the house, looking agitated and thoughtful beyond measure, to the infinite surprise of the servants, who had always seen and thought him the merriest soul living. Shortly after, Lord De Clifford also went out, but his head was higher, and his step, if possible, more pompous than usual.

In the drawing-room was assembled Fanny

Saville and Herbert Grimstone, who, however, was yawning over the fire, preparatory to his going down to his mother's in Bruton Street, with whom he had a little business, from which he hoped to reap pounds *sterling* benefit. The fact was, that some literary cronies of his had requested him to procure Lady De Clifford's picture, and that of her child, for the "Book of Beauty," or the gems, or the something of beauty; upon which Herbert had informed them that his brother detested anything like publicity for his wife, but that if they would insert a portrait of his mother instead, this would greatly oblige them, and he would take care to get the book additionally puffed when it came out. Mr. Snobguess had also read him a glowing panegyric upon Lady De Clifford and her sister, from his book, in which he had declared they were "*exceeding* fine women, and would even be thought such in New York." Herbert pressed his hand, thanked him with tears in his eyes, and said that nothing could give *him*, individually, more pleasure than to hear his sister-in-law's praises, but that he knew his brother's rooted aversion to having any public mention made of his wife; if, therefore, Mr. Snobguess could obliterate the passage, and, without taking up more room in his valuable work, transfer the

eulogium to the dowager, encircling the whole with a comparison about the mother of the Gracchi, and hint that they the Gracchi ('Anglice,' Grimstones) derived all their extraordinary talents from her, it would be much more acceptable, and he and his brother would be happy to do anything for Mr. Snobguess in return. "You understand, my dear sir," continued Herbert, in a filial and affectionate voice, "I would not ask you to allude to us, or our humble talents, whatever they may be, but on my mother's account, and to please her is my brother's and my constant study."

Mr. Snobguess declared that he was *cruel dutiful*, and that it did him *uncommon* credit, and that though he was sorry to leave the other ladies out, as he had considered them *quite the go!* the alteration should be made.

Now it was to impart this intelligence to his mother, and to accompany her to Chalon's to sit for her portrait, that Mr. Herbert Grimstone was refreshing himself over the fire with a few invigorating yawns, previous to his departure for Bruton-street: pushing his hat back, and stretching his arms above his head for the third time, he exclaimed, as if in answer to his own thoughts,—

"'Pon my soul, I don't know what they're

about ; I can't conceive why they don't do something for me and De Clifford ! I hear Denham is devilishly discontented out there too."

Though this speech was evidently a soliloquy, and not addressed to him, Saville replied, "why you can hardly expect great advancement just yet, you must go a step beyond Timbuctoo, and write a book, proving or rather arguing, that the height of virtue consists in breaking every commandment, or else what is better, do it—for that, now-a-days, is the surest stepping stone to literary or political advancement ; let me see, unfortunately you have no wife, nor children, nor sisters.—I have it," cried Saville, in a Eurika tone, "go off with your mother."

"I have always heard," said Fanny, with great solemnity, looking up from the table where she was writing, "that crime carries its own punishment along with it, but that would be *proving* it with a vengeance !"

"Ha ! ha ! ha !" laughed Mr. Herbert Grimstone, as he dragged himself out of the room, for the joke being only against his mother, he enjoyed it as much as any one.

After that amiable and exemplary lady had been made acquainted with the purport of her son's visit, long and varying was the consultation that took place, as to what dress and attitude she should sit for her picture in.

“I think, my dear mamma,” ventured Herbert at last, “you never look so well as when you are writing; your eyelids are so remarkably handsome; there, so,” continued he, taking up a pen, and accidentally on purpose, pushing over a banker’s book, that was lying on the table, on which he began to write pantomimically.

His dear mamma took the pen, and in good earnest wrote him a draft for a thousand pounds. “There, my dear,” said she, pushing it over to him, “I know young men have many expenses, and this may be of use to you, but do not mention it to your brother, as his wife might hear it; and I was saying the other day, that I thought she could do very well without carriage-horses when she got down to Grimstone; so you understand, it is as well not.”

“My dear mamma,” said Herbert, gallantly, kissing his revered parent’s hand, “I always consider every thing you say to me as sacred, and I believe you have never found me betray your confidence, so you may take the ghost’s word for a thousand pounds; but,” added he, smiling, “I assure you, when I began designing the pose of your picture, I had no idea I was such a good *draftsman*!”

Her ladyship’s brain being invariably pun-proof, she merely replied,—

“ Ah, my dear, you always *was* vaustly clever at drawing.”

“ Yes, my dear mamma, I certainly have *drawn* a great deal in my time, but it is a propensity I should wish you to *check*, at least as far as etchings go.”

“ Tut, tut, my dear, it is a delightful talent, and it does you great credit to get through so much.”

“ I do not know, one’s resources get exhausted at last, and for my part I would rather have a ‘*carte blanche*,’ than the finest drawings in the world.”

“ With your talents, my dear Herbert, to be so modest, does great credit to your head and heart !”

“ Talent, my dear mamma, as Snobguess the American author was explaining to me to-day, is invariably derived from the mother, so I may have some pretensions to it.”

“ Very just observation, my dear, for your father was a perfect fool.”

“ Poor man, so I should think,” thought Herbert, but he did not say it, for his mother had from infancy instilled into him, that the truth ought not to be spoken at all times.

After a few more paternal and filial compliments, it was decided that her ladyship should

go to Madame Giradot's to choose a head-dress for her picture. Herbert did not much relish the idea of being boxed up in a close carriage with his dear mamma, and terminating the day with a five o'clock dinner; but still a thousand pounds are not to be got for nothing, and as parliament had opened with a very stormy session, in which the magnates had followed Locke's educational advice of "*laying on the blows with reasoning between*," he would have a good excuse for getting away soon after dinner.

"My dear," said the dowager, "you must come with me to Madame Girardot's, for I am not much in the habit of going *to these here* sort of milliners, as Frump generally makes all my caps and bonnets; but you see so many French ladies, that you will be able to choose me something *degaugée* and pretty."

"My dear mamma, I know no one who has such good taste in dress as yourself, but I shall be happy to accompany you."

Accordingly to Madame Girardot's they drove, and the dowager having paused on the stairs to remark "how *vaustly* impertinent it was of such people to have mahogany doors and window frames," proceeded to the show room, where Lady Sudbury and Lady Stepastray were trying on things, the former a *Ceres* velvet toque,

the latter a sort of zephyr cap, on every web of which fifteen was stamped. Madame Girardot, who had been arranging the folds of the Ceres toque, and assuring Lady Sudbury, that she looked ‘charmante,’ while Madlle Mélanie, her coadjutor, was agreeing with Lady Stepastray, that she looked ‘jolie à ravir dans le petit bonnet de nymphe,’ now paused, and replacing her hands in her apron pockets, and peering round the dowager as though she had been scrutinizing the inmate of a den in the Zoological Gardens, never even condescended to ask her what she wanted. Lady Sudbury, though perfectly acquainted with her by sight, that is as *the mad old Lady De Clifford, who had quarrelled with the whole county*, now raised her ‘lorgnette,’ and investigated her more minutely than Madame could possibly do with the naked eye. Meanwhile Lady Stepastray advanced towards Herbert, with

“The gliding, undulating motion
Which steps, but treads not;”

and having received his assurances that she was looking more beautiful than ever, she cast an inquiring glance towards his mother. Now, like all persons who from oddity, temper, conduct, or any other cause, knew nobody, the dowager was exceedingly tenacious about her

son's not introducing her to every one he knew; and Lady Stepastray being just the person he could venture to introduce her to, he began, in a voice nearly as dulcet as her own,—

“ My dear Lady Stepastray, as I understand you and my mother are both to appear in Snob-guess's forthcoming work, will you allow me to make you personally known to each other?”

“ I shall be most happy, my dear Mr. Grimstone.”

“ My dear mamma,” whispered Herbert, “ Lady Stepastray is *so* anxious to be introduced to you—may I introduce her? I think you've read her books, ‘ The Old Road to Ruin,’ and ‘ The Chamberlain's Daughter.’ ”

“ Oh, dear, yes, to be sure, and *vaustly* interesting they were.”

“ Well, then, I may introduce her to you?”

“ Certainly.”

“ My mother, Lady De Clifford—Lady Stepastray.”

“ I'm charmed to make your acquaintance, Lady De Clifford,” mewed Lady Stepastray; “ for I'm such an admirer of your son's talents.”

“ I'm sure, with regard to talent, nobody has greater *pretensions* than your ladyship,” grinned the dowager.

“ No—no—my dear Lady De Clifford, you

are very good to say so ; but I am cramped. My natural bent is theology and metaphysics ; but novels, you see, are the only things that go down now ; so I'm obliged to write them ' *malgré moi.*' "

" And I'm sure no novels can go down (!) *fauster* than your ladyship's ; but I'm detaining you from your purchases," bobbed the dowager, as she moved away to the other end of the room, where, disencumbering herself of Frump's amateur bonnet, she desired Madame Girardot to produce some of her newest and most '*recherchée*' head-dresses ; but, whether it was that her ladyship's French sounded to Madame's Parisian ears like Hebrew, and that consequently she read it backwards, I know not ; but certain it is that she excavated some of the very dowdiest and dingiest of her last year's hats and toques ; and having strongly recommended the ugliest of the batch, for which she modestly asked treble its original price,—she was listlessly proceeding to wrap it up in silver paper, when Lady Sudbury walked up to her, and said, in a languid and impertinent voice, sufficiently loud for the dowager to hear,—

" '*Qui est cette personnage ?*' "

Girardot, without raising her eyes from the parcel she was arranging, flung one glance round the corner at Lady De Clifford, as she

replied, with a contemptuous curl of her upper lip,—

“Ca ? ça ? n’a pas de nom !”

“Devilish good,” thought Herbert, in his own mind ; but fearing his mother might not be of the same opinion, he looked at his watch, and said,—

“My dear mamma, I fear we shall not have time for Chalon’s to-day, for it is half-past four now ; we dine at five, and I must be down at the House by seven.”

“Oh, very well, my dear ; the best way will be for us to go straight home.” And bobbing across the room to Lady Stepastray, she took her son’s arm, who pressing her hand, as he helped her into the carriage, told her, “That he admired her taste exceedingly in the hat she had selected, as nothing could be more becoming.”

On arriving in Bruton Street, he inquired if his groom was there ; and being answered in the affirmative, he ordered his cabriolet to be at the door punctually at seven. Nothing of any moment occurred at dinner, except that the venison was too high ; at which her ladyship expressed her indignation, by turning sharply round to Croaker, and saying,—

“This *here* venison is perfectly uneatable ; the servants may have it !”

CHAPTER V.

“ They lived together a long time in the greatest unity, *although* they had married for love.”

Fairy Tale of the Princess Lumineuse.

“ The perception of a woman is quick as lightning. Her penetration is intuition, almost instinct. By a glance she will draw a deep and just conclusion : ask her how she formed it, and she cannot answer the question. A philosopher deduces inferences, and his inferences shall be right ; but he gets to the head of the staircase, if I may so say, by slow degrees, mounting step by step. She arrives at the top of the staircase as well as he ; but whether she flew there, is more than she knows herself. While she trusts her instinct, she is scarcely ever deceived ; but she is generally lost when she begins to reason.”

Sherlock.

“ Ich habe genossen das irdische glück,
Ich habe gelebt und geliebet.”—*Wallenstein.*

“ YESTERDAY, by special licence, at the residence of her father, in Berkeley Square, Fanny, youngest daughter of John Pierrepont Neville, Esq., of Bishop’s Court, Yorkshire, to Henry, eldest son of Henry Saville, Esq., of Latimers, Herefordshire. Immediately after the ceremony, the happy pair left town for Latimers. There were present on the occasion the Duke and Duchess of Darlington, the Marquis and Marchioness of Sudbury, Lady Florence Lindley,

the Earl and Countess of Shuffleton, Viscount and Viscountess De Clifford, Viscountess Dowager De Clifford, Mr. and Mrs. Seymour, the Honourable Herbert Grimstone, and the Honourable George Pierrepont. The *dejeuné* was in Gunter's best style, and the trousseau of the lovely bride was furnished by the joint efforts of Mesdames Minettes and Victorine, of Paris."

Such was the paragraph that greeted Cheveley's eyes upon entering the breakfast-room at Cheveley, the morning after Saville's marriage, from attending which, he had excused himself on the plea of indisposition, for he was determined religiously to adhere to his promise to Julia, of not premeditatingly putting himself in her way; and though no one could rejoice more sincerely than he did in his friend's happiness, yet he could hardly have borne to see him married to the sister of the only woman he had ever loved: and contrasted the difference of Lady De Clifford's wretched fate with that of her more fortunate sister. His eyes were still rivetted upon the paragraph, or rather upon the words, 'Viscountess De Clifford;' when a servant entered with a salver full of letters, two of which were from Saville and Fanny, the latter to thank him for a beautiful '*pareur*' of brilliants and sapphires he had sent her as a bridal present.

Cheveley tore this open first, hurrying over all the thanks, and even the hopes that she and Saville might see a great deal of one for whom they had so sincere a regard. His cheek burnt, and his breath was suspended, when he came to the end of the letter, for it contained the words —“ Dear Julia is not quite recovered from the effects of her illness, she is going down to that gloomy, horrid place, Grimstone, by herself. I hope Harry won't feel his manly vanity outraged, but I really am not so selfish as to feel happy, when I think of the undeserved sufferings of one, for whom the best of human lots would not have been good enough.” I told her I was going to write to you, she desired her kind regards and best wishes. My little niece's commission cannot be executed by proxy, as it consisted of kisses, which, as I told her, ‘ She must contrive to give you herself some day or other.’ But the carriage is waiting to take us to Latimers, and Harry has just made his debut in a very conjugally dictatorial ‘ Come Fanny.’ So, fearing it might grow by delay into ‘ Come, madam !’ I must say good bye ; but not before I have assured you,

“ That I am, dear Lord Cheveley,

“ Your grateful and sincere friend,
Fanny Saville.”

“Oh, God ! oh, God,” cried Cheveley, burying his face in his hands, “if I could in any way minister to her comfort, I would willingly sign a compact never to see her;—but to know that she is ill, lonely, driven into a dreary solitude, by the petty tyranny of one who is not content with the most lawless liberty for himself, without oppressing her with the most inquisitorial persecution : it is too—too much ; and I feel all that the world envies, as wealth, station, power,—a mockery, when it cannot extend to her. Julia, my poor Julia—to think that the only being on the face of God’s earth, who would tear out his heart to serve you, is the only one who could not move hand or foot to do so without injuring you, is greater torture than sin could ever deserve, or time ever atone for.”

Cheveley sat so long pondering over Julia’s and his own adverse fortunes, that the butler thought something must have happened, and came to see if he might remove the breakfast things ; at which his master gathered up his letters, and throwing up the window, walked out upon the terrace, followed by Prince, who had exercised an especial guardianship over him of late ; for dogs are sensible people, and see when bipeds are not quite fit to be left to themselves.

As Cheveley walked mechanically on into the beautiful valley that lay at the foot of the gardens, he opened Saville's letter. Nothing could be kinder, or more devoted than its whole tone ; and with that delicacy, which sympathy ever inspires, he entered into, and soothed his friend's feelings, without ever alluding to them ; one thing he hinted slightly, yet firmly, which was, the injury he would do to others as well as himself, by remaining shut up at Cheveley, and not mixing in society as usual. "Saville is right," said he, putting the letter in his pocket, as he walked on with his hands behind him ; "but like everything else that one ought to do, it is much more easily said than done." As he made this reflexion, he reached the last terrace ; the tinkling lulling sound of a fountain, made him turn round ;—the design of this fountain was Hylas and the Nymphs, done in bronze ; but the water in the bason was so stagnant, that it was covered with unblown water-lilies. The thought of these "fair white river-cups," carried him back to Julia and to Como ; and though it was a sharp March day in England, he actually fancied he inhaled the verbenum-scented air of Pliny's villa.

" Thus in each flower and simple bell,
That in our path untrodden lie,

Are sweet remembrances which tell
How fast their winged moments fly."

"I beg your pardon, my lord," said Mr. Marshall, emerging from behind the fountain, and taking off his hat, which Prince began busily investigating, "but I have spoken to one of the gardeners about cleansing this bason; and I hope your lordship won't see it in this state by to-morrow."

"Upon no account let them touch it," said Cheveley; "on the contrary, I am so fond of these lilies, that I wish them to be even artificially cultivated wherever there is water; so have the goodness to attend to it, Marshall, will you?"

"Very good, my lord, it shall be done," said Marshall, bowing a retreat; as Lord Cheveley descended the broad old stone steps, that led into the valley. One side of this valley was bounded by a hawthorn hedge: on the other side of which was a bye-road, leading to Blichingley, and skirted by the arbutus-covered rocks seen from the valley; and, among the crags of which, were to be seen the ruins of the old abbey, before mentioned, as the occasional rendezvous of the gipsies, and their friends and patrons, the smugglers.

Cheveley had a vague recollection of having,

as a child, climbed the opposite heights, and hid for hours among the ruins, to the no small consternation of the inmates of the castle;—and now, not much caring where he went, provided he felt progressing, he even determined to let Prince lead the way, and to follow wherever he went. The dog having effected a passage through the hedge, looked round for his master, but seeing that he was already in the road, he wagged his tail, and bounded swiftly on into the opposite dell. For a few moments Cheveley paused to admire the beauty of the surrounding scenery, ere he followed Prince up the little winding path by the Fairy's Bath, that led to the ruins. Upon gaining the summit, Prince stopped, as dogs will do, to botanize over a tuft of daisies; and not satisfied with the intelligence his nose brought him, he kept scraping and rooting up the earth with his paws; while his master walked on, till he came near the old abbey, when his attention was arrested by the sound of voices talking in a suppressed tone behind the aisle, but still loud enough for him to overhear the following dialogue.

“I think it will be the death of the old man, and that is my only fear,” said a female voice.

“Nonsense. I tell you Madge, it is the only way we can encompass the hunter in his own

toils; and as for the old man, you know he only lives, and would die for revenge, and I honour him for it; and with heart, hand, aye, and blood, too, if needs must be, I will help him."

"Yes; but," persisted the first speaker, "see how he sinks already under disgrace, and the desertion of his neighbours, and but that—"

"But me no buts, girl," interrupted the other voice; "I have never yet seen you in coward's armour; so keep a stout heart still, and you'll not only serve your friends, but, mayhap, be made a lady yourself beyond the seas sooner than you think for: but remember, a craven heart shall never be my wife."

This last threat appeared omnipotent, for the reply was in a coaxing submissive voice.

"Well, well, Miles, you know best, and I would do anything to please you or serve them; so you'll find that poor Madge will be a good girl, and true and silent as the grave. Good lack, this is a strange world; you and I, or at least I, would be scouted as an outcast, undeserving of credit or trust, and yet here is a great man, a gentleman, a nobleman, forsooth, nay, a lawgiver and protector of the people, can do that with impunity for which hanging would be too good were he as one of us."

"The world, Madge, is divided into moun-

tains and valleys: the great people are those upon the mountains, and however wicked they themselves may be, they have a right, because they have the power, to cast stones at those in the valley, whose inferior position precludes both retaliation and redress. But what's the matter with the dog? what is he whining and sniffing at? Wasp, lay down, sir."

"Err-err-err, bow-wow-wow, err-err-wow."

"So, ho, poor fellow: down, my man, down."

"It's only the child teasing him," said the woman's voice.

"Not it, he never minds the child; I hope there's no one outside."

"They could not hear, if there was."

"I'm not so sure of that."

Cheveley, not gathering from what he had heard that any mischief was intended on the part of the two conspirators, but, on the contrary, that some was evidently to be prevented, walked quietly round to the entrance of the ruin; and to give those within fair notice of his vicinity, began whistling and calling loudly to his dog. Before he gained the porch, a man rushed out, and, slouching his hat over his eyes, hurried down the glen: at the same moment a little Scotch terrier trotted up to Prince, barking at him furiously. But while this modicum of

dog's-flesh kept advancing and retreating in quick succession, and wagging both tongue and tail with amazing velocity, his highness stood immoveably still, and allowed himself to be barked at with great dignity and endurance, taking no other notice of the attack, than by placing his black, cold, stately nose amicably close to the aggressor's ear, and ever and anon giving one or two slow wags of his tail.

"Wasp, Wasp, Wasp, come here, sir," said Madge Brindal, now emerging from the ruins, and leading Mary Lee's child. Cheveley started, evidently much struck by the picturesque dress and great beauty of the girl, whose brilliant complexion was rendered even richer at the moment, by the fresh air and bright sunlight, that, together, played upon her cheek.

"Such a fine gentleman as you should have a fine fortune: let me tell it you," said Madge, coming laughingly up to him. "Blessings on your handsome face, may all your years be summers; but I'm sure before I look at your hand that your fate is spun with velvet and silk; do let me unravel it for you."

"Good heavens!" cried Cheveley, for the first time looking at the child, and perfectly staggered with its likeness to Lord De Clifford, "whose child is that?"

“Poor child,” said Madge, her eyes flashing as she spoke, “he has Sin for his father, and Sorrow for his mother; but his father is a great man,—the popular member at Triverton.”

“Lord—”

“De Clifford !” screamed Madge, as though she took delight in the impotent revenge of making the rocks echo with his name.

“Then it must have been since his marriage,” said Cheveley, thinking aloud.

“You know him, then ?” said Madge, looking eagerly in his face.

Cheveley was buried in a train of thought, and made no answer.

“I hear,” continued Madge, “that the wretch has a wife that is too good for him.”

“Too good for him ! too good for any man !” cried Cheveley, biting his lip, and completely thrown off his guard by the violence of his own feelings. This was enough for the quick penetration of Madge; at one moment she discovered the truth, for nothing seemed more natural in her mind, than that a man who never thought of his own wife, like Lord De Clifford, might find other men to do so for him; and having decided this point to her satisfaction, she determined upon availing herself of it, and acting accordingly.

“Well, well,” said she, “it is waste of time to talk of such as him; so do, kind sir, let me tell you your fortune. I’ll warrant, if it ever had any, that the gall is by this time taken out of it.”

“By and bye,” replied Cheveley, smiling; “but first tell me the history of this child.”

“That will I,” said Madge, “I wish I could tell it to the whole world; walk down the glen with me, and you shall hear it.”

He followed her till they reached the Fairy’s Bath, at the foot of the little winding path; when Madge, having pointed to the park trees of Blichingly, that were visible in the distance, commenced poor Mary Lee’s story, and told it to him from beginning to end, acting so vividly the scene, on the night that Richard Brindal had found her a senseless idiot in that very place where they were then standing, that Cheveley shuddered.

“Monster!” exclaimed he, drawing his hand across his eyes, as if to shut out some hideous phantom. “I wish I could see those letters?”

“And so you could,” replied Madge, “if you would come as far as poor Lee’s cottage, for I know where Mary keeps them, and I could get them and show them to you without her knowing a word about it; not that she now minds

any one seeing them : no—no, he has insulted and trampled on her too much to have left any other feelings in her but hatred and revenge ! but it's too far for a grand gentleman like you to walk, and all across the fields too."

"How far is it?" asked Cheveley.

"Nearly three miles."

"Not a bit too far, especially if they are so poor, I may be able to do something for them."

"God bless you for that, sir; but do let me tell you your fortune, for I should like to tell you all the good that I know is in store for you."

"Well, then," said Cheveley, smiling, as he put a sovereign into her hand, "be quick, and give me as much good fortune as this will purchase."

Madge took his hand, and, examining it minutely, shook her head. "This is no common hand," said she: "you have plenty to be happy with, but still you are not so, for there are wings to your heart, and it's not with you—no, nor ever will be till all this has past away. There is blood, and death, and fear, and but little hope, but that little is shrouded in a widow's hood."

Madge perceived a slight tremulousness in the hand she held, and she added, "but this

year binds your fate; hush!" continued she, pointing upwards, and inclining her ear towards her hand, as though listening to some mysterious sounds, for Cheveley could hear none, "hush! aye, the last sound has died away, all now is over, even when there are not *tears* there must be *time* for the dead, and, however slowly it may lag," said Madge, suiting the action to the word, by drawing her hand slowly through the air, and then suddenly stopping, "it must stop at last, and then your sun will rise, and a brighter one never yet rose than it will be."

The oracular voice and Pythian air, that Madge knew so well how to assume, had, in spite of himself, an effect upon Cheveley, for a few minutes, beyond the power of reason and common-sense to ridicule him out of. The skilfully vague way she had alluded to his fate, leaving fancy to interpret, and chance to confirm her predictions, either way, glided from his imagination into his heart; he knew it was a folly, but it was one that for worlds he would not have been disabused of, for love always dislikes the head wisdom that would reduce the heart to sanity, placing the strait waistcoat of reason upon every feeling. There is not, perhaps, a more affecting proof of this extant, than an anecdote Kotzebue mentions, in his "Travels

to Paris," of a girl who was in the habit of being accompanied on the harpsichord by her lover, on the harp. The lover died, and his harp remained in her room. After the first paroxysm of despair, she sank into the deepest melancholy, and much time elapsed before she could bear the sound of music, but one day she mechanically struck a few chords on the harpsichord, when, lo ! her lover's harp, in perfect unison, resounded to the echo. The girl was at first seized with an awful shuddering, but soon felt a kind of soothing melancholy ; she thought the spirit of her lover was hovering near her, and sweeping the strings of the instrument. The harpsichord from this time constituted her only pleasure, as it afforded to her imagination the joyful certainty that her lover was ever near her :—till one day, one of those awfully wise men, who try to know, and insist upon clearing up and explaining everything, came into the room during one of these mysterious duets ; the poor girl begged of him to be still, as at that moment, the dear harp was playing to her in its softest tones. Being informed of the happy illusion that overcame her reason, he laughed, and with a great display of learning and absence of feeling, proved to her by experimental physics, that all this was perfectly natural. From

that moment the poor girl drooped; sank into a profound melancholy, and soon after died!*

What is life, but a series of illusions? for the most part miserable!—then, are they not the worst of murderers, who would destroy the few happy ones that diversify it?

They walked on in silence nearly the whole of the way; while the two dogs, who had by this time entered into an honest friendship with each other, amused themselves by running races, and beating the hedges.

“And so these Lees are very poor?” said Cheveley.

“Very poor now, indeed, sir; few people had a better business than John Lee, before poor Mary’s troubles, but since, he does not seem to exert himself to please people as he used; and, the old lady up at the Park, God forgive her, for that, and all her other wickedness, since her son’s villainy, has tried to prevent people dealing with him; and as they are chiefly her tenants round Blichingley, they are obliged to do whatever she pleases, so that he has little now to do beyond the workhouse coffins; but Mary being better, poor thing, takes in plain work again, which helps them a little. Lee could have got a very good job, to repair the

* This anecdote has furnished the subject of a Tale by the heroic poet Körner, called “The Harp.”

out-houses at Campfield, last week, but he had no money to buy timber, and so was obliged to give it up."

This narration brought them in sight of Lee's cottage; the garden was wild and desolate as usual, but opposite the door was a white birch, which Coleridge has immortalized as the

—— " Most beautiful
Of forest trees, the Lady of the Woods."

Its leafless and shadowy branches were now waving to and fro, as the wind sighed through them, and although it was a bright sunny day in the woods and fields, there was a grey gloom round the nook in which Lee's cottage was situated, that harmonized with the neglected look of the once-blooming garden. Wasp having done the honours to Prince, by pushing open the gate with his paws, and flinging a look of invitation to him over his shoulder to follow,—Madge in her turn preceded Cheveley, and pioneered away the long entangled weeds on each side of the gravel walk that would have intercepted his passage.

" Stop," said he, as Madge laid her hand on the latch of the door, " My sudden appearance, without any ostensible reason, might distress the poor girl; so you can say I have come to bespeak some work from her father, which I intend to

do; but, before I do so, I should like to see those letters you mention; you can make some excuse to call me into the garden, and show them to me there."

Madge nodded assent as she raised the latch, and put down the child, who ran to its mother.

"How he do grow, to be sure," said Mrs. Stokes, who was interrupted, by the child's arrival, in an eloquent lament over the depredations her poultry-yard had lately experienced; all of which, she unhesitatingly attributed to Richard Brindal's revenge, and her husband's inertness. Mary was sitting at work on one side of the fire-place, while her father, who had his iron-rimmed spectacles on his forehead, paused, from his occupation (which was that of fixing up a bracket at the other side of the chimney-piece) to listen to Mrs. Stokes's grievances.

"As I tell 'em," resumed Mrs. Stokes, speaking with even more energy and vitality than usual, "all these here worries'll be the death of me, and who'll manage the concern when I'm gone? and who'll manage John Stokes, I should like to know? oh! it won't bear a thought!"

"Hush!" said Madge, placing her finger on her lip; and then turning to old Lee, she said aloud,—“See here, Mr. Lee, I've brought you

a good gentleman, who wants you to do some work for him."

The old man bowed; Mary rose, and blushed. As she did so, which for the moment brought back all her former beauty, Mrs. Stokes fidgetted into the perpendicular, as she rubbed with her apron the chair she had just vacated, and presented it to Cheveley; during these ceremonies, Madge left the room to get the letters. "Sit down, pray," said Cheveley, seating himself in the chair Mrs. Stokes had placed for him; "don't let me disturb you; I merely came about some work that I wanted done, which I will tell you of presently, if you will allow me to rest for a few minutes."

"Certainly, sir," said the old man; "is there anything I can offer you? all we have is but poor fare, but, such as it is, I should feel proud of your taking it."

"Any think the gentleman would like, I could soon step home and fetch it," said Mrs. Stokes; "and," continued she, rummaging in her pocket, and at length producing a card, which she presented to Cheveley, with many low curtsies, "At any time you should want posters, sir, we've the very best; and post twopence a mile cheaper than the Good Ooman; in short, we've *hexcellent* 'commodation of *hevery*

kind; stabling, lock-hup coach-houses, beds, foreign wines, genuine spirits; and, though I say it, as shouldn't say it, as good a larder as there is in England, no one never hears no complaints of the De Clifford's *Harms*!"

Having thanked Lee, but declined his offer, Cheveley, as soon as Mrs. Stokes would allow him to speak, promised to patronize the De Clifford Arms, whenever he should need the hospitality of an inn.

"Thankee, sir, much obleged to you, I'm sure, but you'll please to hobserve, sir, that hits the right hand side as you come hup from the post-office; for I can't a-bear to see gentlefolks entrapped by the Good Oøman that has nothink fit to be seen. And if they arrive at dusk, its sometimes the case, when they don't *exsac*-ly know which side our house is hon."

Much to Cheveley's relief, Madge now returned.

"Now, sir," said she: "if you please, I'll show you the bee-hives I told you of."

"I fear they are in such a state that they are not fit for the gentleman to see," said Lee.

"Oh, they will do to explain what I mean," replied Madge, hurrying into the garden, followed by Cheveley. "I think we had better turn down the lane, sir," said she; "for we

may be observed here." As soon as they had reached the lane, she gave him Lord De Clifford's letters in rotation, and watched his countenance narrowly as he read them. When he came to the one signed 'William Dale,' Cheveley's indignation rose to such a pitch, that he crushed the letter in his clenched hand, as he exclaimed, "Cold-blooded wretch ! he would be capable of anything, poor girl!"

"Oh, I don't wonder at your being angry, sir," said Madge; "but here is more of it." And she placed the letter from Lord De Clifford to Stokes in his hand.

"And who is this Richard Brindal, that he says was to marry Mary Lee?" asked Cheveley.

"Why, my brother," said Madge, looking down; "and I fear that is the best which can be said for him."

"And she would not marry him, eh?"

"Marry him !—no, sir, she is too broken-hearted to marry any one; and if Dick had been an angel, instead of being the rough, ungainly creature he is, she would scarcely have gratified that wicked lord so much, as to help on his plot against herself."

"Hardly, indeed," said Cheveley; "but look here;" and he put five pounds into her hand, as he returned the letters. "You seem a good

girl, and anxious to serve your friend ; to say nothing of having shown me these letters. If ever I can do any good, by acknowledging that I have seen them, you may depend upon it I shall not deny it."

Madge thanked him, and promised to be silent.

As they returned to the cottage, Cheveley was buried in thought. Bad as his opinion had always been of Lord De Clifford, reality had for once outstripped imagination ; and if he had before pitied Julia for being married to such a man, he now actually shuddered at it ; for what could not such total want of feeling, and want of principle combined, be capable of ? He knew that persons of strong passions seldom have much feeling, and therefore he had never suspected him of any ; but the facts that had just come to his knowledge, painted him in blacker colours than his most vivid fancy could have done. It was the cold-blooded, business-like calculation of his villainy that so revolted him, compared to which the sins of impulse become virtues, however deep their dye.

As they neared the cottage, the pale, blighted, but still beautiful, form of Mary Lee, the silver hair and care-worn look of her father, joined to the proud beauty and suppressed sorrow of

Lady De Clifford in Cheveley's imagination, and formed a group which made it well for him that Lord De Clifford was not near him at that moment. When he re-entered the cottage, he was glad to find that Mary had gone away; for to have seen her again, would only have distressed him still more.

"If you will have the goodness," said he, to the old man, "to give me a pen and ink, and a bit of paper, I'll write down the address where you are to call to-morrow; and as I understand your work is at a stand-still for want of timber, this may help to purchase some," added he, placing a fifty-pound note in Lee's hand.

"No, no, sir," said the old man, his eyes filling with tears, "I cannot take your money till I have earned it."

"I mean that you should earn more than this," said Cheveley, "so I must insist upon paying you in the way and at the time most convenient to myself."

With that good breeding which good feeling inspires even in the humblest, he made no farther objection, but, bowing, merely said,

"As you please, sir. May God bless you," and he placed the pen, ink, and paper, before Cheveley, who wrote—

"Marshall, employ the bearer about every

carpenter's work that is wanted, till farther orders.

“CHEVELEY.

“March 22, 18—.”

And having placed it in the old man's hand, left the cottage, amid the blessings of Lee and Madge, and the reiterated curtsies of Mrs. Stokes. As soon as he was gone, the former put on his spectacles, to read the address of the place he was to go to the next day.

“I declare it is the young Marquis of Cheveley!” said the old man.

“The Marcus of Cheveley!” screamed Mrs. Stokes, “Lor! to think that I should have been so free with a marcus!” The bare idea was so overpowering, that Mrs. Stokes sank back in her chair: but she was not a woman long to be awed by any man; so soon rallying, she added, “but you all saw how *haffable* he was, and you heerd him promise to *paternize* the De Clifford Harms. Well, to be sure, a *marcus*! Who'd have thought it? I *am* surprised.”

“I can't say that I am,” said Madge, “except that he's not a prince, for he looks like one.”

“And acts like one too,” said Lee; “and this I owe to you, Madge; but you are always doing kind things by us.”

“As you must thank some one, thank chances,

or rather Providence," said Madge, "for I have nothing to do in the matter farther than being heartily glad of it."

"You are a good girl, Madge, and have a kind, honest heart," cried the old man, placing his hand upon her shoulder, "and would that many who are called better were half so good."

"Amen !" laughed Madge.

"A *marcus* !" soliloquized Mrs. Stokes, as she pinned on her shawl. "Well, it's a pity some people don't know when they have got a good wife: now, there's that great lazy oaf, John Stokes, I s'pose he'd walk from one *hend* of the world to the *hother* afore h'd fall *hin* with a *marcus*, and get him to promise his custom to the De Clifford *Harms*."

"Are you going straight home, Mrs. Stokes?" asked Madge.

"Let me see," said Mrs. Stokes, abstractedly counting on her fingers; "turbot and lobster sauce, gravy soup; removed with haunch of venison, (can always get that from the park) chickens in white sauce, Scotch collops, *menti-nang* cutlets; remove with jelly, blanc mange, charlotte of *happle*, and custards. The plated dishes—must send 'em to Lunnun to be cleaned, though; and Lord Cramwell's claret. Yes, that's the dinner for a *marcus*," said Mrs.

Stokes, triumphantly, as she concluded this imaginary culinary 'chef d'œuvre.'

Madge reiterated her question.

"Eh—yes—no—why, my dear?" said Mrs. Stokes, gradually descending into the present from Lord Cheveley's dinner, upstairs, in No. 22, at the De Clifford Arms.

"Because I wanted you to take this little parcel, to go by the London coach."

"Oh, well, that I'll do," said Mrs. Stokes, walking out of the cottage, with her head a great deal higher than when she had entered it. "So, good bye."

"I wish, Madge," said Lee, as soon as Mrs. Stokes was gone, "that you would leave a letter up at Cheveley Place for me this evening, for I shall feel quite oppressed till I have tried to thank his lordship for all his goodness."

"I think you had better not," said Madge, slightly colouring, "at least, I mean that you had better not send it by me; he might not like the idea of gipseys coming about his house, or he might think that I was encroaching upon his kindness of this morning; not that he would be likely to know it, but I feel that I ought to keep away, and—and—my going might prejudice the servants against you, and you know what great people they are in a great house."

“Madge,” said the old man, pressing her hand, while a tear rolled down his withered cheek, “you ought to be a queen ; you have more sense, judgment, and good feeling, than half the rest of the world put together.”

Cheveley, after leaving Lee’s cottage, wandered home so abstractedly,

“Chewing the cud of sweet and bitter thought,” that he was in his own grounds without being aware of it, till a servant met him, and told him that Mr. Spoonbill was in the library.

CHAPTER VI.

“The night came on alone,
The little stars sat one by one,
Each on his golden throne;
The evening air past by my cheek,
The leaves above were stirred,
But the beating of my own heart
Was all the sound I heard.”—*R. M. Milnes.*

“And why not death, rather than living torment?
To die is to be banish’d from myself.”

Two Gentlemen of Verona.

“These are diversities of operations; but it is the same God which worketh all in all.”—1 *Cor.* xii. 6.

Two hours after the sound of the chariot wheels, that conveyed Fanny to Latimers, had died away, the carriage that was to take Lady De Clifford down to Grimstone came to the door. Lord De Clifford had engagements which took him out immediately after the wedding, and therefore prevented his being in the way to see his wife off, but Mr. Frederick Feedwell had kindly remained for that purpose. After having passed a week in telling Lord De Clifford that it was weak good-nature in him to allow Lady

De Clifford to remain in town for her sister's marriage, he now spent the short time that intervened between Julia's departure, in shrugging his shoulders, and whispering her that really it was

"De-de-dreadfully tyrannical in De Clifford sending her down alone to that gloomy, desolate place Grimstone, just at the beginning of the season too; and that though no one admired obedience in a wife more than he did, yet there were things that no wife ought to submit to, and it was qu-qu-quite evident to him that De Clifford was getting her out of the way for his own purposes; and though he did not pretend to be ve-ve-very moral, yet really such things were too bad in a married man—a married man, you know, Lady De Clifford!" and up went his two fingers.

Having turned in silent contempt from the serpent-like consolations of Mr. Frederick Feedwell, poor Julia had next to endure what was much more insupportable, the false and treacherous condolences of her mother-in-law.

"My dear madam, I feel quite sorry you are not going to remain the season in town; any one else might find it vaustly dull at Grimstone just now; but with your mind, and the little *gurl's* company, I'm sure you never can be dull."

“ My brother thought, my dear Julia,” yawned out Mr. Herbert Grimstone, as he stood before a glass, arranging the few fractional hairs on each temple, under his hat, “ my brother thought that, not being well, you would prefer being in the country. I’m sure that anything he and I can ever do to promote your comfort in any way we shall be most happy.”

“ I’m sure, my dear, it does great credit to your head and *hort* to say so.”

“ Oh, I’m sure, my dear mamma, Julia will do me the justice to believe, that I have always studied her interests as much as if she had been my own sister.”

But Julia leaving the room in utter disgust at the contemptible little animal’s inane hollowness, the amiable mother and son soon took their departure, and left her to finish the preparations for her journey unmolestedly, save by the sighs and indignation of Beryl, who kept flinging the things about, as she vowed to Miss Grant (little Julia’s new governess, that of all the wicked things Lord De Clifford and his mother had yet been guilty of, “ this sending her dear lady away to that dreary, horrid place, at this time of the year, was the most wickedest.” That she was sincere in this opinion no one can doubt, when it is remembered that ladies cannot

be banished without their maids, and that two hours before Beryl had seen Luton and Gifford so happily forming part of the 'cortège' of the bridal party; all of which formed a most tantalizing back-ground, in her imagination, to the gloomy gable-ends of the Elizabethan pile at Grimstone, with its cold passages, bad neighbourhood, and worse roads, and its village church, which scarcely mustered a congregation of twenty, while the stone effigies of the Grimstones looked only less cold and rigid than their living descendants.

"But never mind; mark my words, ma'am," said Beryl to Miss Grant, as she locked the last imperial with a jerk, and pushing it with her foot, called to two of the footmen to take it down stairs, and let her ladyship know that everything was ready; "Mark my words, ma'am, it will come home to them yet; for it is an impossibility such wickedness should go unpunished, especially with the old woman, who is at the bottom of it all."

"I think, Beryl," said Miss Grant, "you ought to try and appear cheerful and happy, for poor Lady De Clifford's sake; for it can but add to her low spirits, to see every one miserable and discontented about her."

"Oh, bless her!" replied Beryl, "she shall not

see me discontented; but I cannot help saying, ma'am, what I think of those wretches,—for they are nothing else.”

“ Beryl, Beryl,” cried little Julia, running in with Tiney in her arms, “ mamma is waiting, and she says you are not to forget Tiney’s basket; and do give me a silk handkerchief to tie round her poor little throat, for she is trembling with the cold.”

“ If she is so cold, miss, a velvet shawl will be better.”

“ So it will,” said the child, delightedly, as she wrapped up the little animal, leaving nothing but its beautiful head and long ears visible; “ and how pretty she looks, with all this black velvet around her; doesn’t she, Miss Grant?”

“ Yes, dear, very pretty,” replied Miss Grant, patting the dog’s head; “ but your mamma is waiting, and we must go.”

“ I do love you,” said Julia, following her down stairs, “ for you never scold me, and tell me I am a fool, about the dog, as Mademoiselle D’Anto-ville used; and,” continued the child, stopping on the landing-place, and standing on tip-toe, as she held up her little mouth to her governess, “ I like to kiss you too; for you are so pretty, and so smooth, and so clean.”

About three o’clock on the day after she left

London, Lady De Clifford arrived at Grimstone. Dreary and desolate as she had always found it, it was now additionally so, for the house was undergoing repair, and was still full of workmen. The cold, cheerless hall was a perfect chaos, with deal boards, shavings, carpenters' tools, and packing-cases, that had been forwarded from Italy. The uncarpeted stairs presented nothing but dirt and discomfort; and the grating of saws, and din of hammers, distracted one sense, while the dense smoke of green wood, that issued from the cold and long-unoccupied grates, overpowered another.

As soon as Julia had reached her bed-room, she was astonished to see the posts, tester, and foot-board, of an old, carved, black oak-bedstead, in which she was to sleep, still lying in disjointed fragments about the floor ! The fact was, Lord De Clifford had too much on his mind, both amatory and political, to be able to think of such trifles as the comfort and well-being of his wife and child, and, therefore, had only written to Mrs. Jones, the housekeeper, two days before, announcing that Lady De Clifford was going to Grimstone : it was enough for him to know, that they were banished, and thereby that he had the world to himself, without being guilty of the puerility of caring how dreary the banishment

might be. Immediately on the receipt of his letter, poor Mrs. Jones had fumed, fretted, ordered, scolded, scrubbed, swept, and, in short, done all that could be done in the time; and though great had been the labours of each and all, little was the apparent result from them.

“Dear mamma,” said Julia, “come out of this nasty cold room, the smoke will make you cry, as it does me.”

Poor Lady De Clifford sank into a chair, and cried in good earnest. Beryl, who now arrived, laden with cloaks and packages, cast one look round the dreary dismantled room, and muttering, “Well, this is a little too bad,” rang the bell violently. Mrs. Jones appeared, curtsying, and panting, with her hand upon her side, quite out of breath, between agitation and getting up stairs. As soon as she could speak, she also began to cry. “I assure you, my lady,” sobbed she at last, “I never was so hurt in my life, as to think you should have to come to such a place, but I only got my lord’s letter two days ago; and work as we would, we could get no farther than you see, having no idea that the house would be wanted these four months, if then.”

“I think, ma’am,” said Beryl, ironically, “as you pretend to feel so much for her ladyship, you might at least have had her bed put up: where is she to sleep, pray?”

“ Oh, do not say pretend, Mrs. Beryl, for I *do* feel for her ladyship, with all my heart; but it is not my fault about the bed either. Last week a very handsome bedstead, with crimson damask hangings, all beautifully trimmed with white satin, like a wedding bed, came down, and thinking of course it was for my lady, it was put up here: but last night, down came Mr. Tabouret, the upholsterer, in a great fright, and said, it was all a mistake, as it was for my lord’s own room, in Grosvenor Street: so it was taken down and sent away at eight this morning, and they have not yet had time to put up the other.”

“ Trimmed with white satin ! trimmed with white satin ! ” muttered Beryl, bridling up, and throwing every thing about within her reach, “ I’ll tell you what *hit* is, Mrs. Jones,” continued she, walking up to her, and speaking in a low voice, with her teeth set, and her hands clenched, “ I’d a tore it all to pieces with my *hown* ands when it ad the good luck to come in my way, before I’d a let him and his fye-fies a ad such a bed, while his poor dear wife is to be shut up in this dreary prison, without any bed at all it seems. Oh, shame ! shame ! I *wonder*, Mrs. Jones, where your feeling as a woman, as as been a wife, was, to let the filthy bed go back.”

“ Indeed, ma’am,” sobbed Mrs. Jones, wiping

her eyes with the corner of her apron, "had I suspected anything of the sort, I am sure I should have laid violent hands on it."

"Ah! some people never has the sense to suspect nothing, and that's what the men wants to bring us *hall* to; but they will find some of us too many for them yet."

"Beryl," called Lady De Clifford, coughing violently, "do get me some '*pâte de Guimauve*.'"

"If I might take such a liberty, as to ask your ladyship to sit in the housekeeper's room," said Mrs. Jones, advancing, "you would find it what no other part of the house is at present—clean, warm, comfortable, and quite free from smoke."

"Thank you, Jones; but that would be turning you out."

"Oh, never mind me, my lady—I can stay in the still-room, or the hall, or anywhere; but it would be something off my mind, if I could see you and Miss Julia, bless her! a little more comfortable."

"Do, mamma," said Julia; "for Jones used to have such nice cakes and sweetmeats in that room, and I dare say she has still."

Lady De Clifford smiled at the cogency of the child's reasoning; and yielding to the com-

bined entreaties of all present, she took Miss Grant's arm, and followed Mrs. Jones, who led the way to her own territories. Mrs. Jones did the honours of her apartment, by wheeling the sofa near the fire, and removing the bright brass kettle from the hob, also the hyacinths from the chimney-piece, which she feared would make Lady De Clifford's head ache; while little Julia climbed on all the chairs to examine the pictorial beauties of the walls, which consisted of an engraving of the 'Ecce Homo;' Mr. Garrick in 'Richard the Third;' Mrs. Woffington as 'Lady Townly,' in the 'Journey to London;' 'George the Third walking on the Terrace at Windsor;' a large sheep in a green field all to himself, worked in lamb's wool; a print of Grimstone; another of Blichingly; a bunch of carnations tied with a true lover's knot, done in tent stitch, surmounted by a coloured wood-cut of the Marquis of Granby, with a fierce tear going obliquely across his face, the whole enclosed in black wooden frames; while on the mantel-piece, besides the displaced hyacinths, were a Jacob's ladder, in spun glass; a cabriolet, containing a lady and gentleman, of the same brittle material; and a fine coloured pipe-clay eight-inch statue of Napoleon. Between the two windows was a table covered

with green baize, on which stood a satin-wood tea-chest, behind which a japan tea-tray formed a fine Rembrandt-toned back-ground. On the hearth-rug sat a cat, more respectable than stately, who, however, withdrew to the 'bel retiro' of a chest of drawers, upon the entré of Tiney and Zoë.

Miss Grant sent for a square piano out of the school-room, in the hope of making the time pass less heavily; for she played beautifully, and sang with great feeling and expression. Little Julia took her work, and sat at her mother's feet, as she lay on the sofa; and Miss Grant asked permission to read out the three last numbers of 'Nicholas Nickleby,' which soon made Lady De Clifford forget (as it has done many others) all her sorrows for a time. After dinner, Miss Grant had recourse to Strauss, and some beautiful things from the 'Norma' and the 'Lucia,' till at length, pausing to think what she should play next, Lady De Clifford said—

“Do, Miss Grant, if I have not quite tired out even your good nature, sing me those beautiful words of Mr. Kennedy's, which you set to music.”

“They are very beautiful, but very mournful; and I think your ladyship would like a little Venetian air, that I have never yet sung to you, better.”

“ Oh, no—no—nothing Venetian,” said Lady De Clifford, passing her hand over her eyes, “ the other, pray ; for when I feel melancholy, I like mournful music.”

Miss Grant had now no alternative but to comply, and accordingly sang the following beautiful words :—

“ Would that the hour you called me thine,
Deserted girl, had been our last !
Before the star had ceased to shine,
Whose influence then was o’er us cast.
Would that we had not linger’d here,
But in the stillness of that dream
Floated to some less troubled sphere,
Like rose-leaves down a summer stream.

“ Thy heart to loneliness and grief
Then had not been an early prey ;
Nor had I felt my fond belief
In life’s illusion fade away.
Oh ! no, I had not lived to mourn
The choice I in my madness made ;
Of toys by folly won and worn,
Which left for banish’d peace a shade.

“ The world—my uncomplaining love—
The world I wooed, avenged thee well ;
The golden shower I prized above
Thy young affection, on me fell.
The hand of power, the voice of fame,
In later days have both been mine ;
But never have I felt the same
In heart as when you call’d me thine.”

The expression of indignant feeling Miss Grant threw into the last verse, did ample justice to the beautiful words, and left the echo of

her voice floating on the heart long after its sounds had ceased. The rest of the night passed wearily away, for it was past midnight before Lady De Clifford's room and bed were ready. On taking up the newspapers the next morning, Julia had the pleasure of reading the following paragraphs, all 'en suite.'

"Yesterday morning, Viscountess De Clifford left town for Grimstone, where it is her ladyship's intention to remain during the rest of the season."

"Yesterday evening, Viscount De Clifford entertained a select party at dinner, at his residence in Grosvenor Street. Among the company present were, the Earl and Countess of Shuffleton, Lords Albert and Harry Dinely, Viscount St. Leger, Lady Charlotte Loory, Lady Stepastray, the Hon. Mrs. Dreadnought, the Hon. Mrs. Reynard Alley, the Hon. Herbert Grimstone, Mr. York Fonnoir, Mr. Snob-guess, and Mr. Frederick Feedwell."

"The Dowager Lady De Clifford also had a 'soirée musicale,' at her house in Bruton Street, yesterday evening, which was numerous and fashionably attended."

"It is currently reported in the highest circles, that a marriage is on the tapis between the young Marquis of Cheveley and the beautiful

Lady Fanny Germaine, the accomplished niece of the Premier."

Now, though Julia had often tried to persuade herself that Cheveley ought to marry, nay, though she had gone still farther, and tried to persuade herself that she *wished* him to do so, and though she did not believe this report of his marriage with Lady Fanny Germaine, yet it had the power of making her additionally unhappy for the rest of the day. Alas! poor human nature; disguise it as we will, love makes a chameleon of the heart; since, under its influence, every passing breath gives a different hue to its feelings; it only requires a word, a look, a tone, to make it 'couleur-de-rose,' and half of either, to render it more drear and dark, than a starless midnight. It is this atmospheric variability, if one may use the expression, that occasions the thousand little dissensions that spring from love itself; for, it is generally in the fondest moments, that hearts that love ask and expect sacrifices, and each feels chilled and disappointed that the other has not yielded to it:—"You should not have asked at such a time," pouts one; "Ah! *you* should not have refused," sighs the other, and both are equally disappointed, in the ovation that each thought should have been exclusively theirs.

Time rolled on, and except that passed with her child, whose sweet young nature daily promised all she could wish, it was weary in the extreme to Lady De Clifford, for there is nothing more difficult for the unhappy to get accustomed to, than a *forced* and cheerless solitude : to be alone *often*, is not only a relief, but a luxury ; but to *be always* alone is next akin to madness. Except from Fanny, she seldom heard from any one ; for her most professing friends were too happy, and too gay, and too busy to write ; and when they did, their letters were either filled with their own triumphs, or with offensive and frivolous apologies for not having written before ; which, in plain English, amounted to ‘ I’ll write to you when I have nothing better to do, and this is as much as you can, or ought to expect, now that you are no longer in the way to contribute to our amusement or well-being.’

She was also somewhat amused and disgusted at hearing that ladies who called their husbands brutes, tore their pocket-handkerchiefs, and went into hysterics at the disappointment of a delay about a ball or an opera box, were much shocked at her for not *cheerfully* submitting to whatever species of banishment Lord De Clifford ordained for her ; while other exemplary ladies, though engaged to be married to another before

their husbands were cold in their graves, were equally shocked at her *want of feeling* in writing to them in unmeasured terms of grief at the loss of a faithful dog, who had been her unchanging friend and companion for years ; and wrote her word she *must be mad* to think of intruding her canine loss upon the orthodox affliction of black crape and muslin caps. This was too disgusting to be angry with, and she merely thought of the story of the rich Venetian lady, who, when her confessor came to condole with her for the loss of her husband, found her in high spirits playing piquet with an adventurer; he remonstrated upon the indelicacy of such a proceeding :

“Ah padre mio,” said the lady, “had you come a quarter of an hour sooner, you would have found me dissolved in tears ! but I staked my grief on the game with this young man, and, as you perceive, I’ve lost it !”

Julia had still to learn, that she should not measure other hearts by her own ; for she would have done more to serve an utter stranger than her ‘soi-disant’ best friends would do to secure her salvation : no wonder then that she was disappointed ; but disappointment, after the first bitterness is past, is a fine tonic, and gives an elasticity to the mind, that saves it from all future morbidity ; when once we reflect in th-

beautiful words of James Knox, that

“ The friends have all deserted us,
We lov'd in days of yore,
Since stranded by the storms of fate
Upon misfortune's shore.”

We begin to weigh those friends in the balance, and, if among the gay, the hollow, and the worldly, they are sure to be “found wanting,” to lose such, then, is in fact, “to gain a loss:”—at first, we grieve over the worthless phantom; but, oh! the happiness as we look wistfully back again through the vista of years, to discover *some* dear “old familiar faces,” with hearts *as familiar*, whose mild steady light of love, made no display in the sunshine of prosperity; but returns to cheer, guide, and help us through the night of adversity; and prove, that in *some instances*, the bread we have cast upon the waters, does indeed return to us after many days. Would that I could dip this pen into my heart, and I should be eloquent in praise of one, whose kind gentle heart, is now cold and still; but the good *he did is not* “interred with his bones;” for he has delegated it to one, as kind, as diligent, as generous, as delicate as himself; but how poor are words for friendship such as theirs, or gratitude like mine. May the path they have smoothed for me on earth be remembered to them in heaven!

It was now May, beautiful balmy May, that always seems to me like the first love of the year, when the flowers begin to blush beneath the warmth of the sun's gaze, and the bees murmur honied nothings in their leaves. Lady De Clifford had so portioned out her time, as to fill up every interstice of it : her child, her flowers, her visits to the poor, and long country walks, all filled up the day ; and even in the stillness of night, when thoughts, those noiseless and undeniable visitors, *will* intrude, she would get up, write letters, or do anything to banish the remembrance of Cheveley. Then came Sunday—a Sunday in the country, when there is a holy calm in all around, as though Nature herself was hushed in prayer, and no sound steals on the ear, but the bells of the village church, proclaiming the Sabbath through the quiet fields, and harmonizing the spirit to thankfulness and hope. How often she thought, as she walked to the lowly fane, and still more, when she heard the words of comfort and encouragement enforced and expounded by Mr. Osborne, the rector ; that she *had*, or that she *would* conquer herself ; that she would never rest till she had uprooted every sinful feeling ! but still, thoughts, which are the shadows of feeling, would sometimes intrude in spite of herself.

She had been nearly three months in the country, and notwithstanding all her incessant struggles with, and occasional victories over, herself, she had never had courage to take the sacrament; she wished, hoped, feared, trembled, and deemed herself unworthy of it. Whether it was that Mr. Osborne had remarked her constant attendance and attention at church, and her non-attendance at the communion table, or that he merely gave the admonition, in the course of his duty, towards all his parishioners, she knew not, but certain it was that on the tenth Sunday after she had been at Grimstone, had he been sitting in Julia's heart he could not have replied to her thoughts, or refuted her doubts better. His text was from 2 Cor. v. 17—"If any man be in Christ he is a new creature."

In the course of his sermon he said (and Lady De Clifford *thought* he fixed his eyes upon her), "Let no one be discouraged from coming to Christ, because he finds not in himself that godly sorrow for sin, that ability to repent, and all those spiritual qualifications which he desires to have: we must first be in Christ before we are new creatures; we would fain have something before we come; we are prone to conclude that God's pardons are not free, but that we

must bring something with us wherewith to purchase them; but no, the proclamation runs thus—‘Buy, without money,’ ‘Come, and take the water of life freely.’ Therefore do not say ‘I have a sinful disposition, and a hard heart, and cannot mourn for sin as I should; I will therefore stay till I am better.’ This is as though I should say, ‘I will go to the physician, but I will have my malady healed first.’ The end of going to Christ is, that this very hardness of thy heart may be taken away; that this very deadness of spirit may be removed; that thou mayest be enlivened, quickened, healed: that thou mayest hate sin, and become fruitful in righteousness, before thy soul be united to Christ by a living faith. For it is faith that purifies the heart, and works (produces good works) by love. We must not pretend to serve God by only going to church, and doing other acts of outward devotion; while we are dead and cold our religion is vain. They who, like Mary, seek grace from the words of Christ, receive the assurance of divine approbation; and this stimulates them to fresh acts of piety and beneficence. It is almost impossible for such to go on in haughtiness, envy, hatred, and disobedience. Grace and faith will resist it, and make them lowly, gentle, willing, obedient, ac-

tive, without relying on any works of their own. Whosoever withdraws his heart and senses from the bustle and noise of this world, looking for salvation through the blood and righteousness of Christ, will certainly find there, that ‘better part, which shall not be taken from him.’ ”

That day Julia remained for the sacrament. She returned home, feeling happier than she had done for some time ; she had cast her burden upon him who could alone bear it ; she had sought God, and found him, and peace was once more in her heart. It has been truly and beautifully remarked by some one, that “moderation is the silken string running through the pearl chain of all virtue.” Lady De Clifford felt this, and made no violent resolves ; but a calm determination never to think of Italy, or anything connected with it, seemed to diffuse itself over her mind. On her return home, little Julia ran into her dressing-room.

“Dear mamma,” said she, kissing her, “how well you look—like what you used to look.”

“E vero—vero,” chirped the starling, that Cheveley had given her ; the sound of the bird’s voice, for a moment, sent the blood from her heart to her cheek ; but making a great effort, she turned to Beryl, who was taking off her things, and said,

“Take the bird down to Jones’s room, Beryl, will you, for it disturbs me.”

“Poor Pipola,” cried little Julia, “do let me have him in the schoolroom, mamma?”

“No, love,” replied Lady De Clifford, “he would disturb you at your lessons;” and she blushed as she made the objection, for she felt it was a subterfuge; but being so often there herself, the poor little starling would as much remind her of all she wished to forget, as if he had remained where he then was. Beryl took the bird: his mistress gave one last look at him as he left the room, and if, for a moment, tears gathered in her eyes, they only served to commemorate the first signal victory she had gained over herself.

From that day Lady De Clifford pursued “the even tenour of her way,” and gradually began to regain the peace she had been so long a stranger to; her chief solace was in the instructive society of Mr. Osborne, and his kind-hearted wife. She received few letters, except from Fanny and her husband, and they breathed the very spirit of affection and friendship; in his last, Saville had mentioned that Mr. Herbert Grimstone had been appointed to a northern embassy, and had taken his departure the preceding week. The only drawback to the quiet

enjoyment of her present mode of life, was the occasional long country visits she had to pay over bad cross roads, with miserable post horses. All newspapers she had eschewed, for they were sure to contain something to annoy her, one way or the other, and she had made a resolution that she would not be annoyed. She was sitting one evening on the lawn, looking at little Julia and Zoë running races, when she saw Mr. Osborne walking up the broad gravel walk of the 'pleasaunce.' She rose to meet him.

"Good evening, Mr. Osborne, what a lovely day this has been ! I hope you are come to stay, and that you will allow me to send down to the rectory for Mrs. Osborne."

"Thank your ladyship, not this evening," replied Mr. Osborne, "for I have to go and see a poor man who lies dangerously ill five miles off; but as you say you never look at a newspaper, I could not resist bringing you this, and begging you to read the ablest and most eloquent speech, without exception, that I have read a long time; it has made a tremendous sensation in London, and, politically speaking, has nearly annihilated Lord Melford."

"I have no great love for politics," said Julia, smiling, "but to please you I really think I could read a whole debate. What is it about?"

“Lord Denham and the colonies,” replied Mr. Osborne, looking down the columns of the paper. “Ah, here it is. ‘The Marquis of Cheveley rose in reply.’ ”

Luckily a garden seat was near, into which Julia sank, for at Cheveley’s name, coupled with such unqualified approbation, the blood seemed to eddy in a whirlpool round her heart, and a sudden faintness came over her.

“Dear Lady De Clifford, you are ill !” said Mr. Osborne, anxiously.

“No, no, only a slight spasm, it will be over in a minute.”

“I fear the grass may be damp, as the dew is falling ; you had better not stay out.”

“Oh, I am better now,” said Lady De Clifford, rising. “Which gate did you come in at ? a walk will do me good, I’ll go as far as the lodge with you.”

“I came by the lake, and left my horse at the other side of the ferry.

“Very well, then, we’ll go across the park ; that will be the shortest way,” replied Lady De Clifford, taking Mr. Osborne’s proffered arm.

During the walk, Mr. Osborne could talk of nothing but Cheveley’s speech in reply to Lord Melford ; and his praises were too sweet to Julia’s ear, for her to interrupt him. Nor was

it till some time after she found herself alone, that she was sufficiently composed to read it herself; while her heart responded in audible echoes to the ‘cheers’ with which it was so thickly interlined. Oh! what triumph has earth for us like the fame of those we love? Julia felt an indescribable pleasure in repeating over and over again every word Cheveley had uttered, and reiterating the plaudits he had received, in imagination, she heard every varied inflection of his deep, eloquent, and beautifully-modulated voice;—what wonder, then, if she lingered

“ By the lake with trembling stars inlaid, till earth was still,
And midnight’s melancholy pomp was on the distant hill.”*

* I know not who may be the author of these two beautiful lines, but I found them in Doctor Weatherhead’s very clever and agreeable Pedestrian Tour through France and Italy. Simpkin and Marshall: 1834.

CHAPTER VII.

“To be a beggar, it will cost the richest candidate every groat he has ; so before one can commence a true critic, it will cost a man all the good qualities of his mind, which, perhaps, for a less purchase, would be thought but an indifferent bargain.”

Swift.

“My brain, methinks, is like an hour-glass,
Wherein my imaginations run like sands,
Filling up time ; but then are turn'd and turn'd,
So that I know not what to stay upon,
And less to put in art.”—

Ben Jonson.

“His low and charmed voice made the still air so sweet,
That bees might leave Hybla, to seek honey there.”

Unpublished Play.

CHEVELEY had taken Saville's advice, and had forsaken the prison of Solitude to work on the treadmill of Society. And, oh ! the weary toil it was to him. “But another year,” he thought, “and there will be no necessity for this sacrifice ;—and for her dear sake what would I not do ?” The very homage he received in the world disgusted him ; for he knew that it was not for himself, but his position ; and that had he been the most stupid, or the most wicked of God's creatures, he would have been equally popular, and equally caressed. The Savilles

were still at Latimers, so that he felt every day more and more the desolation of the crowds in which he mingled,—for companionship he had none.

Lord Melford had again made fruitless overtures to him, the result of which was a total cessation of all private intercourse between them. And, though gifted with no ordinary powers of eloquence, Cheveley had no ambition to be an orator; but he felt that he had no right to form part of the legislature of his country, without defending her interests by exposing political profligacy, whenever its nature or extent forced him so to do; and, roused both by justice and indignation, at the flimsy equivocations and true Whig chicaneries by which Lord Melford had attempted to deny and defend some of his most undeniable and indefensible measures, he had made the able and magnificent speech at the beginning of the session, which Mr. Osborne alluded to in the last chapter. If the congratulations of friends, the extorted praise even of opponents, and the universal celebrity it insured him, could have made him happy, Cheveley ought to have been so; but when the mind is swayed by one master passion, what mere bubbles, formed and dissolved by a breath, are the greatest triumphs that do not relate to it!

If he did feel anything like gratification at the sensation his speech had made, it was only when he thought that Julia would read it, and approve of the principles which dictated it, and the manner in which he had advocated them ; he also felt a secret, but natural satisfaction at the blow he had struck at the party of which the man he despised most on earth, Lord De Clifford, formed one of the tools and supporters. With him personally he had no intercourse whatever ; but it provoked him to see a man, by dint of party spirit and puffery, maintain his footing in the world, whom, if his real character were known, the least fastidious would have shunned. Plato does not deserve all the credit he has got for saying to Speusippus, when his servant had been guilty of a great fault, “Do you beat that fellow ; for I am angry with him, and shall go farther than becomes me :” for when others avenge us, we are doubly avenged ; it is the having *none* to do it for us, that makes us to use our own hot anger, and “go farther than becomes us.”

It was this conviction that kept Cheveley out of Lord De Clifford’s way ; for he felt he could not trust himself with him. That he should hate his wife, was no longer a mystery to him ; for, as Seneca truly observes, “’Tis a damned

humour in great men, that whom they wrong, they'll hate ;"—especially should wives (as they are foolishly apt to do, when they writhe under them) venture to complain of their vices ; for then they reward their interference like that of Praxaspes, and convince them, after a King Cambyzes' fashion, that a continuance of their excesses only enables them to pierce the heart, and destroy life with a more unerring aim.

Oh ! what an odious monster is an unprincipled press-gang—writing, telling, and propagating lies, from morning till night. Smiling in the face, and stabbing in the back ! Of all reptiles, scribbling underlings are the vilest. Who from parasitical maggots, gloating on the meats of the rich man's table, turn into literary panders to the rich man's vices, whether printed or acted ; who spit their anonymous venom with impunity at the weak or the injured ; and, while, serpent-like, they entangle their victim in their slimy coils, feel safe themselves from attack, from the conviction, that none care to encounter the pestilence of their breath. Cheveley felt this, not indeed in his own person, for he was rich, and great, and consequently beyond either their malice, or their meanness, their falsehood, or their fawning ; but like all generous natures he could resent, and feel indignant at, injuries

that were not his own ; and was often roused, at seeing others suffer under

“ The oppressor’s wrong, the proud man’s contumely,

* * * *

The insolence of office, and the spurns,
That patient merit of the unworthy takes.”

He had lately been much disgusted, at a series of snake-in-the-grass critiques upon Charles Kean, that had appeared in the Investigator ! and an anonymous back-stabber, that disgraced a new periodical, another vehicle of the Fuzboz and Fonnoir clique, of which Fuzboz was the writer. But Cheveley’s surprise would have ceased, had he known, what others knew, viz. that Fuzboz had formerly been under many obligations to Charles Kean ; and it was an approved and successfully practised custom, among the great men with whom Fuzboz was now accustomed to live, and for whom he had the honour to do dirty work, to blot out all obligations, with injuries, unless those of money, and dinners figuring in the *present tense*.

Cheveley had come to town, for a ball at D—House ; but not knowing how to get rid of the intervening time, he had asked Mr. Spoonbill to dinner, who proposed their going to the play.

“ With all my heart,” said Cheveley ; and as he had no fancy for hearing all Shakspear clipped

into two words, he decided upon going to Drury lane, and seeing what he had long wished to see, Kean's Hamlet.

The house was crowded, and his box being the third from the stage in the first tier, he had a good opportunity of watching the thousand variations of the young actor's beautiful and expressive countenance. Except perhaps his father's, never were such eyes seen in a human head; every look was a creation stereotyped in light, caught from the Promethean spark within; there was indeed

“The mind the music, breathing from the face,” and echoed by a voice, that was the very poetry of sound: while the grace of each movement played round him, like the radius of an immortal halo: never to his feeling had Cheveley heard Shakspear declaimed before. As the play advanced, it became a query in his mind, how nature had worked out her designs; whether she had made the poet for the actor, or the actor for the poet; so co-equal was the genius before him, that embodied, with the immortal genius that had conceived the subtle workings of the “noble mind” that was there o'erthrown. No actor perhaps ever before so intimately combined the ‘*os magna sonaturum*,’ which is the corporeal part, with that deep *pathos*, that is the very

soul and essence of tragedy. The scene at the play, where Hamlet, lying at Ophelia's feet, watches the king's countenance, was almost supernatural; the envenomed words of the player seemed to act as conductors to the lightning of Hamlet's looks, and actually to blast his uncle's heart. Another masterpiece was the closet scene with Gertrude. The tone of reproachful sorrow, in which he uttered the words

“ Mother, *you* have much offended my father.”

seemed, ‘*jure divino*,’ to annul the ties of nature between them, and wring her heart with the same sadness as his own. Evening after evening, did Cheveley continue to enjoy the high intellectual pleasure of Kean's acting, till he became puzzled which character to fix on as his ‘*chef d'œuvre*.’ So excellent were all, that each seemed in its turn best; but after seeing him again and again, he gave the preference to *Hamlet* and *Lear*; for though he had often seen a drivelling old fool totter over the stage, that the play-bills called *Lear*, he had never before seen Shakspear's *Lear* personated; every one that had hitherto attempted it, seemed to forget that there is a pith and marrow in curses; a stamina in unredressed wrongs; an Herculean thew and sinew in hatred, that no time can wither into age: as *Lear* himself says,

——— “ When the mind’s free,
 The body’s delicate : the tempest in my mind
 Doth from my senses take all feeling else.”

Kean’s Lear is throughout “ every inch a king,” never a driveller ; and when his provocations are considered, scarcely a madman. So fierce, foul, and unnatural, is the conduct of his daughters, that horrible as their father’s curse is, yet it is so well earned, that every word seems to fall but as the blows of even-handed justice. In the hands of an unskilful actor this curse becomes revolting, and therefore, seeming unnatural, places Lear on a level with his daughters ; but as Kean gives it, all our sympathies remain with Lear, and in the midst of the awful and supernatural images raised by his fearful imprecations, we still behold the

“ Old, kind father, whose frank heart gave *all*,”
 and feel with him, that

—— “ that way madness lies.”

In the last act, where he is dying, and says,

“ And my poor fool is hang’d ! No, no, no life ;
 Why should a dog, a horse, a rat, have life,
 And thou no breath at all ? O, thou wilt come no more,
 Never, never, never, never, never !”

his acting is, without exception, the finest thing that ever was seen ; his heart literally appears to break, and it is some minutes before even the fall of the disenchanting green curtain can

convince us that all we have seen and heard is not real.

“And this,” said Cheveley, as Hamlet died, “is the man that such a reptile as Fuzboz dares to criticise—nay, more, attempts to decry; but Seneca is right, we should never have heard of Sophroniscus but for the son of Socrates; nor of Aristo and Gryllus if it had not been for Xenophon and Plato; and, I suppose, the same age that can produce a Kean, must of necessity, by some inscrutable law of nature, balance the marvel with a Fuzboz!”

“No doubt,” replied Mr. Spoonbill; “for so it has been in all ages; and what is worse, many of the master-spirits of this earth, have only obtained ‘post obits’ on posterity, and starved themselves, while they made all succeeding generations rich with their posthumous fame. Look to the chronicles of our own country for instance—old Baker, in Elizabeth’s reign, gives us an inventory of *illustrious* personages, long since forgotten, and now unknown, and winds up as follows:—‘It might be thought ridiculous to speak of stage-players, but seeing excellency in the meanest things deserves remembering, and Roscius, the comedian, is recorded in history with such commendation, it may be allowed us to do the like with some of our nation. Richard

Burbidge, and Edward Alleyn, two such actors *as no age must ever look to see the like*; and to make their comedies complete, Richard Tarlton, who for the part called the clown's part, never had his match, never will have. For writers of plays, and such as had been players themselves, *William Shakspeare and Benjamin Jonson*, have especially left their names recommended to posterity !' Now, when there could by any possibility be a period when Shakspeare only served to cap a clown ! we cannot so much wonder that there might be another, wherein a Fuzboz would dare to criticise a Kean."

"Very true," said Cheveley, "for the Eros-tratus breed is by no means extinct; and those who can do nothing great themselves, are ever anxious to secure fame's bastard, *notoriety*, by destroying the great achievements of others. How I should like to know Charles Kean; I admire all I have heard of his private character so much; and after all, that is the *real* portion of a man, which we should either value or despise: for genius, without the rudder of principle; or talents, without the ballast of moral qualities, serve but to lure others to the same destruction that awaits their possessor."

"You would be fortunate if all your wishes

could be so readily accomplished," said Mr. Spoonbill, "for I made his acquaintance last year, and a more agreeable, gentlemanlike fellow, I don't know any where ; I'll introduce you to him now, if you like, if you will come with me to his room."

"Thank you, I should like it of all things," said Cheveley, rising to follow Mr. Spoonbill out of the box.

Upon entering Kean's dressing-room, they found him still in Hamlet's dress ;—the presentation over, they entered into conversation ; and Cheveley found him to the full as agreeable as Mr. Spoonbill had represented ; he expressed his unqualified admiration of his Hamlet, not indeed to the full extent of what he felt ; for on the same principle that prevents a man seriously and deeply in love, paying compliments ; it is utterly impossible, to say *all* we think *to* a person, for whom we have a genuine and enthusiastic admiration.

In the course of conversation, Mr. Spoonbill alluded to the Fonnoir clique, and was not sparing of contemptuous epithets on Fuzboz.

"I must say," said Kean, smiling, "his poor malice, with regard to myself, reminds me of a new reading. A man playing in a barn once gave to the end of Hamlet's soliloquy after the

players leave him, where instead of saying, as it is written,

(‘ As he is very potent with such spirits,)
Abuses me, to damn me :’

he thundered out—

(‘ As he is very potent with such spirits)
He abuses *me* too, *dam’me.*’ ”

“ Ha ! ha ! ha ! ” laughed Mr. Spoonbill, “ don’t say another word, for if you begin your good stories I shall stay here all night, and old Lady Dullgabble bespoke me a week ago to escort her to D—— House ; and as I saw her here this evening, I must now go, and either hear you abused, or made odious by comparisons with John Kemble. So, my lord,” added he, turning to Cheveley, “ I’ll leave you and my inclinations with my young friend here together.”

Cheveley at the moment was busy looking at the picture of Kean’s father, which his son always wore when he played Hamlet, and it was not till Mr. Spoonbill had closed the door after him, that he felt as if he was intruding upon his new acquaintance ; therefore, after having obtained a promise that he would dine with him the next day, he took his leave, possessing the rare satisfaction of retaining his veneration for

the genius, wholly unimpaired by his personal intercourse with the man.

When Cheveley got into his cabriolet, he drove rapidly on, as men are wont to do when their thoughts are going a great pace. He tried to confine them to Kean, to Hamlet, but everything that was good, or beautiful, or fine, never failed to remind him of Julia; he thought how she would have enjoyed the acting he had seen that night, and then he thought of the lonely desolate life she was leading. Here the noble animal he was driving felt an additional lash of the whip, and thus urged to the top of its speed, dashed furiously on, till coming in sudden and violent contact with the pole of an omnibus, the horse reared, the shafts of the cabriolet broke, and Cheveley only escaped being dashed to pieces, by jumping out on the pavement at the top of the Haymarket.

A crowd, as is usual on such occasions, having instantly gathered round the place of the accident, the horse's head was soon secured, and the groom enabled to extricate him from the broken shafts, which as soon as he had done, Cheveley ordered him to take the cab to Adams's, and the horse home, and send the carriage as soon as possible for him to the Carlton, whither he would walk. Accordingly, emerging from the

crowd, he retraced his way down the Haymarket without further impediment, till he came to the Little Theatre, where there was an immense crowd, the play being just over. He was in the act of crossing to the other side of the street, when his attention was arrested by the cry of "Lady De Clifford's carriage," and the answer, "Lady De Clifford's carriage stops the way." Was it—could it be that Julia was in town?

As he asked himself this question, his heart beat so violently that he almost reeled again, and might have fallen, had he not, in rushing back to the porch of the theatre, leant against a pillar. He had scarcely drawn his hat over his eyes, before the words "Lady De Clifford coming out" fell upon his ear: suddenly his heart stopped beating, his breath was suspended, and he seemed actually to hear as well as see with his eyes, as he rivetted them on the door of the theatre; presently two figures appeared, which the light fell full upon: they were Lord De Clifford and—his mother. The former handed the latter into her carriage, and Cheveley sank back against the pillar, as disappointed and angry as if any one had deceived him, besides his own hopes. When the carriage drove off, Lord De Clifford, in returning into the theatre,

jostled against Cheveley, and trod upon his foot, whereupon, instead of apologising, he said, savagely,

“D—n you, why don’t you stand out of the way?”

“Because I have as good a right to the way as you, my lord,” replied Cheveley, haughtily.

“You know me, then?” drawled Lord De Clifford, who had evidently taken too much wine.

“But too well,” was the laconic reply.

“What the d—l do you mean by that, sir?”

“I mean what I say.”

“Then,” retorted Lord De Clifford, vehemently, “I’ll make you eat your words, and may they choke you, as you swallow them!” so saying, he raised his arm, but Cheveley calmly, but resolutely, seized it, and pressing it back towards its owner’s breast, walked under a lamp, as he replied,

“And *you* know *me*, too, my lord, so beware of what you are doing.”

“Le-Le-Lord Cheveley!” stammered Lord De Clifford, starting back a few paces, and then added, in an ironical tone, “the Triton of the Tories—the denouncer of democrats—the Demosthenes of dandies,—most true, I know you; but allow me the honour of renewing my ac-

quaintance with you at Wimbledon to-morrow ; a little cold lead will prevent my thinking as lightly of you for the future as I do at present."

"Whatever your thoughts of me, or your designs on me, may be, you shall not betray me into a street brawl, especially as I perceive your potations have been as liberal as your politics, my lord."

"Ye-ye-you shall repent this ; you shall hear farther from me, my lord marquis," muttered Lord De Clifford, closing his teeth, and clenching his hand."

"As you please, my lord," said Cheveley, walking away from him, and turning into Pall Mall.

And what were Cheveley's feelings as he hurried along? His first impulses were human, and consequently bad: for a few seconds his heart was a chaos of hope, triumph, ecstasy; here was the man he hated most on earth—who stood between him and all he loved, who caused all the misery of one whose happiness was dearer to him than his own—thrown, by a sudden quirk of fortune, and that none of his own seeking either, completely into his power; he knew himself to be an unerring shot. *To-morrow*, that little feather from the wing of time, which had now nearly dropped, might

blot him from creation, and leave Julia *free*. But duelling he had always been sufficiently narrow-minded to consider as much murder as stabbing or poisoning, and would Julia link herself to a *murderer*—the murderer of her *husband*? Ay, still her *husband* in name and in bond, if in nought else. But then *he* was no David, sending Uriah into the field to be slain; the quarrel was none of *his* seeking; nay, more, it had been thrust upon him; the laws of society demanded that he should take it up. So far sophistry, but what did the laws of God demand? that he should “*do no murder*,” and Cheveley’s *honour* being derived from those laws, however fierce the struggle might be within, he generally ended by obeying them. When he reached the Carlton, he threw himself into a chair, exhausted by the conflict that he had undergone with himself; but having once resolved upon the line of conduct he should pursue, he became calm, and when the carriage came, returned home to make some slight alteration in his dress and proceeded, as he had originally intended, to D—— House. In the cloak room he was intercepted by Lady Stepastray, who mewed up to him with

“My dear Lord Cheveley, don’t you think that picture,” pointing to one opposite where

they stood, "has a great look of Lady De Clifford?"

"Good heavens, no! as unlike as I to Hercules," said Cheveley.

"What a pity it is she and her husband cannot live together," purred Lady Stepastray.

"And why can they not, pray?" asked Cheveley, bitterly.

"Oh, poor man, he says she has such a horrible temper, and is so dreadfully extravagant."

Cheveley bit his lip nearly through, but being determined to hear all the little demirep before him had to say, made no reply.

"And besides," continued Lady Stepastray, "he says she is so insulting to his mother, too; now that is very bad, you know, especially when the old lady has been so kind to her; for Lord De Clifford himself told me, that his mother had gone on her knees to him not to marry Julia Neville, and yet, after all the *very next day* she received her as a daughter, in the most affectionate manner. Now, so ungrateful of her, you know, my dear Lord Cheveley, to behave ill to her after this," moralized Lady Stepastray, crossing her hands, and looking up in his face.

Cheveley could stand this no longer, but replied indignantly,

“I always knew Lord De Clifford to be an unprincipled, cold-blooded profligate; but I never before knew he was so barefaced a one, as to utter such despicable falsehoods against an innocent and exemplary wife, whom he and his vile old mother have left nothing undone to injure, persecute, and insult.”

“No, no, my dear Lord Cheveley, I really don’t think so, for Mr. Fonnoir and Fuzboz, and other men who live a great deal with him, now really a *great deal*—dining with him three or four times a week, say, it’s *entirely* Lady De Clifford’s fault, and I think *he’s* such a *very* superior person; did you see a review he wrote upon my book in the Investigator? now, it showed such a fine mind; yes, yes, depend upon it, my dear Marquis, Lady De Clifford is to blame; *he* should have married a woman of superior mind, who could have appreciated him,” concluded Lady Stepastray, looking tenderly in her own face, as reflected by the mirror near which they were standing. At this juncture, Cheveley espied Mr. Spoonbill towing Lady Dullgabble up stairs, and breaking from Lady Stepastray in disgust, joined them, leaving her Arcadian ladyship alone with Lord De Clifford’s cowardly falsehoods, that she had uttered at second-hand. Lady Dullgabble had

an ample face, into which her nose modestly retired; a figure like a carriage bed rolled up for travelling, and arms like young bolsters; her voice was deep-toned like a watch-dog's, and she boomed out her words slowly and jupiterically, (here's a new word! and if people don't understand it, I can't help it): she had also a graceful fashion of holding up one side of her gown, no doubt to show that her ankles were legitimate branches of the same family as her arms.

"How did you like Kean's Hamlet?" asked Cheveley, when they had waded through the two first rooms, as far as the door of the ball-room.

"Why, I must confess, even better than my friend John Philip Kemble's, though hitherto I have considered no one could act Hamlet after him," *tonansed* Lady Dullgabble.

"From all I have heard of him, I should have thought that he'd have been too cold and too measured for Hamlet," said Cheveley.

"Yes, true, he certainly was too cold and too measured for Hamlet," interposed Mr. Spoonbill, "but the fact is, I never saw Hamlet before I saw Charles Kean's, though I have seen the play a hundred times; but you must see him in his Macbeth; his Macbeth is splen-

did; I don't like his Othello *quite* as well as his father's."

"Macbeth can't be acted now that Mrs. Siddons is gone," said Lady Dullgabble, shaking her head; "and there is an error in Kean's Macbeth: he says, '*Is this a dagger that I see?*' too quickly. John Kemble used to say it *very slowly*."

"Then, with all due deference to your better judgment," bowed Cheveley, "I think John Kemble was wrong, and Charles Kean is right; for all excitement, and *nearly* all passions, especially those of fear and horror, are quick and sudden, and not slow and measured."

Here the Duke of D. came up, and with his wonted amiability and good breeding, left "Metal more attractive," to speak with, and listen to Lady Dullgabble's prosings. Having shaken hands with him, Cheveley sauntered through the rooms, and could not help thinking, as he looked at *some* of the ladies present, that it might be truly said of them, as the Spanish sage said of Alexander the Great, that their "*virtue was nothing more than a successful temerity*."

Next to the happiness of seeing the face we love best on earth in a crowd, is that of meeting the looks of one, who loves what we love, and

who has been with us in gone-by hours, too happy ever to return : it is like a sudden ray of sunshine lighting up the heart ; and so Cheveley felt, as he unexpectedly caught Mrs. Seymour's eyes, as she was wading through the crowd, to speak to him.

"I am so glad to see you," said she, extending her hand, "You remind me so of old times : do you remember at Milan ? at Venice ? and, poor dear Julia,—my heart aches when I think of her ; but, come into the little room, where the cameos are, and we can talk at our ease, for there is nobody there."

Cheveley offered his arm, but his heart was too full to speak, and they walked on in silence, till they reached the room Mrs. Seymour had mentioned ; it was deserted, save but a solitary couple, who were flirting over a cabinet of antiques, but who took flight on the entrance of the new comers. Cheveley had always liked Mrs. Seymour, but he now positively loved her, for the affectionate manner in which she had spoken of Lady De Clifford.

"And I am so glad to see you looking so well," said Cheveley, seating himself on the sofa beside her. "Have you heard from Mrs. Saville lately, and—and Lady De Clifford ?"

"Why, as for Fanny, she is so taken up with

Love and Latimers, that she is a most unprincipled correspondent, getting over head and ears in one's debt ; but I heard from poor Julia to-day, though I won't tell you what she said of your speech, in answer to Lord Melford's, for it would make you too vain."

"And *did* she read it?" said Cheveley, a flush of pleasure suffusing his face, as he asked the question.

"That did she, but I have no time to talk of speeches, even though they be *yours* ; for you see me in a regular fury."

"Then you manage to conceal it wonderfully," smiled Cheveley.

"No I don't, nor I don't want to conceal it ; oh ! if I were but a man ! I've always wished this, but I wish it now more than ever."

"Pray make me your deputy," laughed Cheveley, "even before I know what services you require of me."

"A very simple one : nevertheless, one I cannot delegate to you, for fear of what a maiden aunt of mine calls the consequences ; nothing more or less, than to kick or horsewhip that wretch De Clifford."

A cloud passed over Cheveley's face, as he replied, "Why ? what can he have done to you ?"

“To me, personally, nothing ; but not content with the ill-usage of every description he has for years heaped upon that poor injured wife of his, he has had the base falsehood, and cowardly meanness, as his own conduct becomes worse, to give out that *her* temper and extravagance is the cause of their not being together now ; and for the few days I have been in town, I have heard nothing else, till my blood actually boils with indignation ; especially as it is only in her letter of to-day, that Julia mentions having been dunned for a bill of Miss Laura Priest’s, the creature he is now living with, whom it appears has dared to take Lady De Clifford’s name ; being shielded and countenanced on all occasions, by that disgrace to human nature, Lord De Clifford’s mother. And to think, because he is the tool of the basest political faction that ever existed, that he is to be upheld, and supported in the world ; and that there is not a human being, with sufficient honesty and courage, to expose him and vindicate her ; oh ! it is too, too bad.”

“ *It is too bad,*” said Cheveley, leaning his forehead upon his hand ; “ but don’t you know, that in this, our moral country, private vices are always merged in public virtues ? with one man’s pet sins, no other man has a right to interfere :

above all with the treatment of wives, for a wife is a man's own exclusive property, an ambulating chattel, for whose comparative value the law has recently established a tariffe; for I read in the police report, a few days ago, that a fellow having severely beaten his wife, and his donkey on the same day, the worthy magistrate fined him fifteen shillings for the latter outrage, accompanied with a lecture on cruelty to animals; and added another five, for the former, but lesser misdemeanour. Poor Lady De Clifford! her brothers are out of the country; and, unfortunately, other men having no acknowledged right to interfere with her husband's mean persecutions, and glaring vices, would only injure her by attempting it. Besides, as I before said, this is a moral country, and as long as men 'speak by the card,' no one ever thinks of testing their words by their actions. And in speeches and political articles, no one utters more sublime sentiments than Lord De Clifford; to say nothing of his having laboured indefatigably, in both, to etherealize the Newgate calendar, and prove that vice ceases to be vice, when indulged in by superior natures. Now considering how prone all men are to evil, you must confess, that the philosophy that would destroy the tolls, and barriers, established by

narrow-minded virtue, along the high road of crime, and the sophistry that would macadamize and render it smooth and pleasant, is entitled to the gratitude and applause of the mass of mankind. Hypocrisy, too, next to wealth, is the most powerful lever of life; and this Lord De Clifford possesses in an eminent degree; no one knows better than he does, '*qu'il faut hazarder un petit poisson pour prendre un grand*;' and plausibility is the bait, that best catches that great Leviathan, public opinion."

"Still, I say," replied Mrs. Seymour, "that it is a thousand pities there is no one to unmask this hypocrisy."

"Why should there be, when it is chiefly exercised against a woman, and that woman a wife? and, as far as the intercourse between man and man goes, pistol-balls, and black-balls, regulate to a nicety their moral code. Besides, thanks to the Whigs, falsehood and duplicity no longer lie under the stigma with which prejudice for so many years oppressed them; for now-a-days, when men tell the most barefaced lies, they clearly prove to their own, and every one else's satisfaction, that it was only another and more circuitous way of telling the truth; and in political parlance, when one man calls another a liar, a coward, or a blackguard, he

explains, that he only means to say, that the honourable gentleman is the soul of truth, the phoenix of valour, and the quintessence of respectability. So much for our English synonymses."

"Ah!" sighed Mrs. Seymour, "like all men, you treat the subject lightly, and think we women have nothing to do, but silently endure."

"If you think so," said Cheveley, "you widely mistake me; for I defy any woman to think so badly, or, at least worse, of my own sex than I do; for I look upon civilized man, giving way to his civilized vices, and exercising to the utmost the brutal power awarded him by those iniquitous laws which he himself has made, as a perfect monster; but, until women think, feel, and act a little more like rational beings than they do at present, I fear their most miserable and degraded position will never be bettered."

"You are now talking so sensibly," said Mrs. Seymour, smiling, "that I could listen to you for ever. But it is very late; every body seems to be going, and I suppose we must go too."

So saying, she rose and took Cheveley's arm, who handed her to her carriage, promising he would call upon her the next day.

Upon returning home, he inquired if any one had called; but was answered in the negative.

He retired to bed, but not to sleep ; for he was feverish and over-excited, and moreover angry with himself, for the self-delusion he had tried to practise, in referring his resolution not to fight with Lord De Clifford solely to moral objections, when, after all, the fear of placing another and insurmountable barrier between him and Julia, was the strongest, and therefore perhaps the real motive from which he acted. Still he had always had fixed and decided opinions on this subject, and thought with Seneca, "Our fate is at hand, and the very hour that we have set for another man's death, may peradventure be prevented by our own !"

CHAPTER VIII.

“ To fight, to bleed, perchance to die !

‘ But fight you *must*.’ ‘ Then I’ll fight *shy*.’ ”

“ Ego ero principia.”

Terent.

“ Indignus qui illi matellam porrigat,

Dispeream si tu Pyladi præstare matellam

Dignus es, aut porcos pascere Pirithoi.” *Martial.*

“ ‘ Objection !’ exclaimed Mrs. Crummles ; ‘ can it be possible ?’

“ ‘ Oh, I hope not,’ cried Miss Snivellicci ; ‘ you surely are not so cruel. Oh, dear me ! well, I—to think of that, now, after all one’s looking forward to it.’ ”

Nicholas Nickleby, No. VIII, p. 230.

No sooner had Cheveley left Lord De Clifford on the preceding night, than the latter determined to repair to Mr. Frederick Feedwell’s chambers, in Lincoln’s Inn, and request his services in conveying a challenge to Lord Cheveley ; but, as he walked along the Strand, the fumes of the wine evaporated, and he began to think, as he had often thought before, when on the eve of fighting a duel (which, however, he had never yet fought), that it was a very foolish business, and that if he could in any way get out

of it, it would be as well. To be sure, were he quite certain which way the affair would terminate, it might be of service to him with his own party; but then events and wishes are nine times out of ten *vice versâ*, and plots, like curses, are generally reversionary. Thus pondering, he found himself in the great square of Lincoln's Inn. As he ascended the steps of Mr. Frederick Feedwell's house, a figure emerged from the next door, which, as it stood under the lamp, Lord De Clifford recognised with an exclamation of "God bless me! Nonplus, is that you?"

"Ah! how do, my lord? Should have been to see you, but only arrived in town at nine to-night by the Dover mail, and have been ever since here, with my friend Serjeant Puzzlecase, about another law-suit that rascal Whoson Hatter has got me into; and seventy thousand pounds are not to be let to run away from one, without a man looking which way they go. Ladies well, eh?—Miss Fanny married, all that sort of thing—your brother has got *an-ice* place in Russia—ha! ha! ha! There's worse in the north as the proverb says: and how are you, quite bang up to the mark, eh?"

"I hope I shall be to-morrow," said Lord De Clifford; "for I've a duel to fight."

“ A duel ! whew—fair and softly, as lawyers go to heaven. I’ll inform against you, ’pon my soul, I will ; fighting is all nonsense, unless one’s paid for it, which one never is in these ‘ piping ’ and *crying* ‘ times of peace,’ as my friend Shakspear has it.”

Lord De Clifford was much of the major’s way of thinking ; but still, for the look of the thing, he was obliged to give a decided shake of the head, as he replied, “ It must be ; so come with me, will you, up to Feedwell’s rooms. I want him to be my second.”

“ Well, if you *will* fight, why don’t you get your friend Fonnoir for a second ? for he’s long and dismal, like a winter’s evening, and the very look of him, I should think, would frighten a man into an apology ; but who’s your mark, eh ?”

“ That d—d Tory, Cheveley.”

“ My stars and garters ! why, I always thought he and you were as thick as mud in December.”

“ You thought wrong, then,” growled Lord De Clifford, as Mr. Frederick Feedwell’s door opened, and he cleared the first flight of stairs, followed at a slower pace by the portly figure of Major Nonplus. It being now “ the very witching time of night,” Frederick was in bed ; but groaning amain, and tossing to and fro in the

night-mare, like a whale on a sand-bank. In the midst of the cosmetics on the toilette, towered, like a cedar of Lebanon, his Hyperian wig, supported by a block not much thicker than its owner's head. The mirror was so covered with wax, as scarcely to leave a bit of the glass visible, thereby proving his Catholic worship of himself, as he was evidently in the habit of lighting tapers before the shrine of his idolatry, and, to judge from appearances, had *waxed* fonder and fonder of his own image. About a dozen wedding rings, tied together with a piece of blue riband, and as many different locks of hair, much resembling those in hairdressers' shops, 'affiché-ing' themselves as pupils of the 'Tyrean dye,' with a miniature of himself, attached to a hair chain, formed part of the paraphernalia of the dressing-table.

"Come, get up, my good fellow, will you?" said Lord De Clifford, pushing Frederick with his stick, as one does a star-fish, on the sea-shore; "get up, I want you to take a message to a man for me.

"N- n- no more," muttered Frederick, "the truffles are bad, and the tongue should have been roasted 'à l'Espagnol.'"

"Come, turn out, my fine fellow, and don't lie there, giving tongue like a hound," said

Major Nonplus, suiting the action to the word, with an emphatic slap upon the most defenceless portion of Mr. Frederick Feedwell's person, who, mechanically applying his hand to the injured spot, exclaimed,—

“Oh ! take it away, take it away, it's so d—d hard, I never shall be able to digest it.”

Here another push from Lord De Clifford completely awoke him, and perceiving that two *men* were standing by his bedside, he immediately put himself ‘*en scène*,’ by starting up, placing his hands before his eyes, and crying out,—

“M- m- Mary ! Caroline ! what brought you both here together ?”

“Ha ! ha ! ha ! I look very like a Caroline, truly,” said Major Nonplus,—“So you must be the Miss Molly, my lord ; but I say, Feedwell,” continued he, hooking the string of wedding rings off the table, with the end of his cane, “How came you by this bunch of *crim cons*, eh ?”

“Ah,” said Frederick, with a dyspeptic sigh, “I've paid for them.”

“That I'll be bound you did for *every one* of them,” roared the major.

“That dreadful laugh,” shrugged Frederick, to Lord De Clifford, jirking the two fore fingers of his right hand above his head.

“Feedwell,” said Lord De Clifford, “get up; I must fight to-morrow morning, or at least the next day, and you must be my second.”

Now, there was nothing Mr. Frederick Feedwell so much delighted in, as being made a *personnage* of, having his name in the papers (no matter on what account) and being talked about, if it were only to be abused; so, rubbing his hands, and springing out of bed, he exclaimed,

“Who is it, my d- d-dear fellow?”

“Oh, that d—d fellow, Cheveley.”

Mr. Frederick Feedwell was a *true friend*, and therefore, never missed an opportunity of infusing a little wormwood into his sweetest counsels, or most sympathetic moments; consequently, he replied, as he doffed his night-cap, and donned his clothes,—

“Oh, Lord Cheveley! the man who made that speech that the world has been ringing with? he certainly is the be-be-best speaker that has appeared for ages; it is to be hoped, my de-de-dear De Clifford, that he’s not as good a shot as he is an orator, or you’ll have no chance, you know.” And up went Mr. Frederick Feedwell’s two fingers, as if registering his prophecy on the ceiling.

“What d—d stuff you do talk, my dear Feedwell,” said Lord De Clifford; and, ringing

the bell violently added, "have you any soda water in the house?"

"Yes, plenty; but tell me how you got into this squ-squ-squabble with Lord Cheveley."

"Why, it's a foolish business altogether," replied Lord De Clifford, as he seated himself in a chair, stretched out his feet horizontally, pushed his hat over his eyes, and placed the head of his cane between his teeth; "I jostled against him coming out of the Haymarket, and telling him to get out of the way, he answered me devilish impertinently, *not, of course, seeing who I was*: one word brought on another, and I said he should hear from me, and there the matter rests till you go to him; but—"

"Of course, my dear fellow," stuttered Mr. Frederick Feedwell, hurrying his toilette as he spoke, and delighted in the prospect of a quarrel, wherein his own personal safety was not the least endangered, "I'll go to him the first thing in the morning; but I shall be ready now in five minutes, and will walk home with you, where we can make all the necessary arrangements."

"Ay, exactly so," interposed Major Non-plus, as he poured out a large bumper of hock, that had arrived with the soda water.

"But I think," resumed Lord De Clifford,

“that it might be settled in some way ; for, you see, I want to speak on the Corn Laws, on Thursday ; and then this d—d election in two months, and altogether—not that *I* would make an apology, my dear Feedwell, but if you could get *him* to do so,—you understand.”

Mr. Frederick Feedwell did understand perfectly, but being much addicted to what is vulgarly called ‘blowing the coals,’ he laughed, as he replied,—

“Ah ! my dear fellow, ‘*facies tua computat annos*,’ Lord De Clifford lowered, and rising with solemn anger from his seat, said coldly, “if you cannot be serious for one moment, even on an occasion like this, I shall seek the assistance of some one else.”

The amiable Frederick perceived he had gone too far, and, by no means wishing to lose the support of Lord De Clifford’s acquaintance, and passing in rapid review before his mind’s eye, the sundry dinners and innumerable petty squabbles that would take place in the ensuing election, he instantly changed his tone to one of friendly consideration, and said, as he placed his hand on Lord De Clifford’s arm, and drew him back from the door,—

“My dear fellow, you quite mistake me, I only meant to say, what I always think, that I

don't know so clever, or so a-a-a-able a person anywhere as yourself, but we'll talk over this matter in Grosvenor Street," casting a significant look at Major Nonplus, which said as plainly as look could say it, "When we are not 'gêné' by him."

"I think though," chimed in that worthy individual, as he paused between each mouthful of a second glass of hock which he had taken to *taste*, having swallowed the first without that preliminary,—“I think Lord De Clifford is quite right, that, as he has a speech to make, and an election coming on, there is no use in his fighting, but quite the contrary.”

“I!” thundered Lord De Clifford, “I never said any such thing, sir.”

“Well, then, you meant it, my dear lord, and that is the same thing.”

“It is not the same thing, sir, and—and damn it, *I'm* going to fight, and I *will* fight.”

“No, now indeed, I don't think you'll have any occasion,” persisted the poor one-idea'd major, pouring out a third relay of wine, “for the marquis is a very *gentlemanly* man, and I'm sure everything will be as amicably settled as you can wish. Very sound good wine, that; in capital order, and I'm in marching order; ha! ha! ha! so good night, good night, I hope I

shall hear that it's all right to-morrow." And, securing his umbrella, ever anxious to guard against water of any kind, he departed.

That night Mr. Frederick Feedwell passed in Grosvenor Street, concocting plans with Lord De Clifford, how to manage, so as to get Lord Cheveley to *apologize* for the insult that had been offered to himself. Accordingly, at nine, the following morning, Mr. Frederick Feedwell sallied forth, and Lord De Clifford trusting implicitly to the great Frederick's diplomacy, paced up and down his library, spouting out his intended *impromptu* speech on the Corn Laws.

When Mr. Feedwell arrived at Lord Cheveley's house in Carlton Gardens, he found it undergoing repair, and therefore had to retrace his steps to the Clarendon.

"Pray, is Lord Cheveley at home?" inquired he of the porter.

"Really can't say, sir, but I'll call his servant." Sanford appearing, the same question was put to him; and after eyeing the querist with that supercilious "Who on earth are *you*?" sort of look, which servants bestow on persons of not very aristocratic appearance, when they are not chartered by being on their master's or mistress's visiting list, replied,—

"He *is* at home, sir, but his lordship's bell has not rung yet."

“ Will you give him this card,” said Frederick, “ and say I wish to see him on particular business ?”

“ Perhaps you’ll be so good as to wait in the drawing-room, sir, till my lord’s bell rings.”

“ I’ll ge-ge-go into the drawing-room, but will thank you to give Lord Cheveley that card immediately, as the business is pe-pe-pepressing.”

“ May I ask, sir, if you come on the part of Lord De Clifford ? for the marquis gave orders that he was to be informed if any one came from his lordship.”

“ I do, and shall be much obliged by Lord Cheveley’s seeing me as soon as possible.”

“ I’ll give your message, sir, directly,” said Sanford, closing the drawing-room door, as Mr. Frederick Feedwell drew a chair to the open window, with a laudable curiosity to see what Bond Street looked like at half-past nine in the morning :—but all was like his own eyes, wide, dim, and vacant. He was beginning to weary of the similitude, as it was now a quarter-past ten, when suddenly he espied Fuzboz, sitting in a sort of Sardanapalus attitude, with folded arms and slouched beaver, in the very centre of an open hack cabriolet, a blue fustian bag between his feet, and a half-bound quarto under

his arm. He might have, and most probably had been, eating "mutton cold," as he had been confined at home for the last week with a great press of business, though he certainly had *not been* "cutting blocks with a razor;" for his chin, like Mr. Metcalf's tooth-brushes, was composed of "*real* bristles;" but Fuzboz was in the habit of "going the whole hog"—so no wonder.

"Fuzboz! Fuzboz!" cried Mr. Frederick Feedwell, from the balcony, "Stop one moment."

And accordingly, hearing his euphoneous cognomen, Fuzboz looked up at the window from whence the sound proceeded, and ordered the driver to stop; while Mr. Frederick Feedwell, who did everything violently, rushed down stairs into the street; and, after having shaken Fuzboz's hydrophobia-looking hand, spluttered out

"I only wanted to know at what hour I should be likely to find you at 'the Investigator' office to-day, as De-De-De Clifford is almost in for a duel with Lord Cheveley; but I've come down here to try and get him out of it. But, at all events, we must have a panegyric in 'the Investigator' on De Clifford, which ever way the affair terminates."

"But what? how? I mean when did all this happen? Very odd he has not consulted me,"

said Fuzboz, looking leading articles at Mr. Frederick Feedwell.

“ Oh, he’s not had time, nor have I either, to tell you any more now ; for he knocked me up at one this morning about it. But remember, my dear fellow, that Cheveley’s a Te-Te-Te-Tory, and gave Lord Melford that terrible mauling about Lord Denham’s business.”

“ Yes, yes, he shall be dealt with accordingly ; but if you’ll be down at the office with me at half-past three, and tell me all the particulars, I can better understand what’s to be done, for just now I’m in a hurry too, on my way to the Moon office, to get a paragraph put in about Lady De Clifford’s extravagance. Laura Priest’s brother, you know, writes for the Moon ; and as people are beginning to make themselves impertinently busy about some facts they have got hold of concerning De Clifford, it is necessary for us, and all his friends, to attack his wife in every covert way we can, in order to guard him against a meddling world.”

“ Qu-qu-quite right, my dear fellow ; so ‘vale’ for the present.”

This conversation was carried on in a whisper, while the cabman was arranging the decorations of his horse’s head. And when Mr. Frederick Feedwell re-ascended to the drawing-room, he

found that Lord Cheveley had not yet appeared, though the time-piece announced that it only wanted a quarter to eleven. Frederick looked wistfully at the prawns, cold chicken, and 'paté de Strasbourg' on the breakfast-table, and thought, with a sigh, what sacrifices to friendship (!) the "flat, stale, and unprofitable usages of this world," compel a man to make.

There is something tragic in deep affliction, that always goads people into soliloquizing; and Frederick sighed forth, as he raised his eyes tenderly to the looking-glass, "'A ogni cosa è rimedio fuori, qu'alla morte,' says the proverb; but I can add, or *hunger* in another man's house, when you come to him on an affair of honour." The word was scarcely uttered, when the door opened, and Lord Cheveley advanced, apologizing for having detained Mr. Feedwell so long, and seating himself, begged Frederick would do the same.

"I am co-co-come, my lord," commenced the latter, "on the part of Lord De Clifford, touching a misunderstanding that occurred between him and your lordship, under the portico of the Haymarket theatre last night." Here Frederick paused, evidently expecting the aid of an interruption; but Cheveley continuing silent, and merely bowing, he resumed: "I must say, though I say it entirely from myself, that I

could wish to see this matter amicably adjusted, thinking it a thousand pities that the valuable lives of two persons who *have been* friends"—(here a slight curl of Cheveley's lip induced Mr. Frederick Feedwell to add)—“I believe I am correct in using the term ‘friends,’ my lord,—should be risked for so te-te-te-trifling a cause.”

As he finished this peroration, Lord Cheveley recognized the gastronomic Giovanni, who had deplored Lady De Clifford's temptations at the Athenæum; and a mingled feeling of indignation and disgust coming over him, he replied, coldly and haughtily, “With regard to risking my own or another's life, sir, I have fixed, and, I am sorry to say peculiar, opinions. With regard to a misunderstanding between Lord De Clifford and myself, there was none—for we understood each other perfectly; but, with regard to an apology, whether he”——

Here Sanford entered with a card. “The gentleman is anxious to see you, my lord.”

But before Cheveley could take the card off the salver, and tell Sanford that he could not see any one then, Major Nonplus (for it was no less a personage) followed his credentials, and, panting like a seal out of water, exclaimed,

“Delighted to see you, my lord—knew, if it was only for the sake of old lang syne, you'd be at home to *me*; so came up without more ado.

Hope I may be instrumental in arranging all this business *comfortably*."

"What business?" inquired Cheveley, annoyed at his intrusion, and not imagining he could possibly allude to the duel.

"Why, this tiff between you and Lord De Clifford to be sure; but I'm certain *he's* no hostile wishes, but quite the contrary: for as he said last night in my friend Feedwell's chambers, having a speech to make on the Corn Laws, and an election coming on, and all that sort of thing, it would be rather provoking if he was to be killed before he got through either."

Cheveley could not help smiling, at perceiving that Major Nonplus had lost none of his wonted tact in serving his friends; but Frederick looked oyster knives at him, and wished that he might that very day order mushrooms and get toadstools, as he turned to Cheveley, and stammered out—

"My lord, Major Ne-Ne-Ne-Nonplus makes some strange mistake: for though Lord De Clifford did say something about his speech on the Corn Laws, and his approaching election, in my room last night, yet it certainly was not coupled with any reference whatever to his meeting with your lordship, and—"

"That's right, Fred—go it, my boy—never stick at anything to serve a friend, and lies 'au

blanc' are nothing more than lentils after the same fashion." And so saying, the major gave Mr. Feedwell a slap on the back, which must, had he eaten that morning, have considerably impeded his digestion.

"Whatever cogent reasons Lord De Clifford may have for not wishing to go out with me," said Cheveley, "they cannot exceed *my* determination not to fight with him ; and—"

Here Frederick rallied, and, putting on a bullying tone, said, "If you do not *wish* to accept Lord De Clifford's challenge, I shall be happy to convey any apology to him with which your lordship may charge me."

"In the first place, sir," replied Cheveley, "*as yet* I have received *no* challenge from Lord De Clifford : if he sent any, it is still in your custody, for you have not delivered it to me. In the next place, it is Lord De Clifford that does not *wish* to fight with me, and I who do not *choose* to fight with him. For apologies, in accepting his, when he sends it, he will have received mine ; neither his *speech on the Corn Laws*, nor his *election*, shall receive any impediments from me ; and now, sir," concluded Cheveley, ringing the bell, and pointing to the door, "I have the honour of wishing you a very good morning."

Frederick seeing that he had a very resolute person to deal with, and that Major Nonplus, according to custom, had completely let the cat out of the bag with regard to Lord De Clifford, and marred everything, thought it politic to make good his retreat; and muttering, for his own satisfaction, when he got outside the drawing-room door, that he was sure Lord De Clifford would be happy to accept *Lord Cheveley's apology*, repaired first to Fuzboz, where they mutually concocted a paragraph, highly laudatory of Lord De Clifford's honour, and valour, and more than intimating that nothing but Lord Cheveley's *reluctance* to fight, had prevented a hostile meeting between them; concluding with an assertion, that it was in defence of the liberal and enlightened political principles Lord De Clifford had always advocated with such consistent firmness, that the misunderstanding had originated. This done, he returned to Lord De Clifford, making up the best story he could, and entirely attributing his not having brought him off with more flying colours, to Major Nonplus's usual kind zeal in serving his friends. Meanwhile, the worthy major remained to breakfast with Cheveley, and soon succeeded in making the 'pâté de Strasbourg' look as foolish as he had done Mr. Frederick Feedwell.

CHAPTER IX.

“ *Whoso findeth a wife, findeth a good thing, and obtaineth favour of the Lord.*”—*Proverbs* xviii. 22.

“ What frantic voices rise at times,
Wailing, or glorying in their crimes ;
As faith, or frenzy, or despair,
Inspire their latest, wildest prayer.”

Reade's Deluge.

“ Bring flowers to the captive's lonely cell,
They have tales of the joyous woods to tell,
Of the balmy air, and the free blue sky,
And the bright world shut from his languid eye.”

Felicia Hemans.

It was an unaccountable thing, but so it was, that as the Reverend Nathaniel Peter Hoskins advanced in his designs upon Miss Lavinia Macscrew, he also progressed in his evangelical tenets. He had lately written a tract, entitled “ The Warming-pan of Faith : to take the Chill off the Death-bed of Sinners.” A new stage coach had also been recently established at “ The Mitre,” at Triverton, the announcement of which, owing to a false punctuation, ran thus—

“ THE STAR

“ A New Light, Day Coach,”

and was consequently supposed, by all persons of "the right way of thinking," to have been established for the safe conveyance of *heavenly bodies* by the pious Hoskins. So true is Seneca's observation—"that every man (aye, and woman too) takes notes for his or her own study. Put a grammarian to a Virgil, he never heeds the philosophy, but the verse. In the same meadow the cow finds grass, the dog starts a hare, and the stork snaps a lizard. Tully's 'De Republica' finds work both for the philosopher, the philologist, and the grammarian. The philosopher wonders how it was possible to speak so much against justice. The philologist makes the observation, that Rome had two kings: the one without a father, and the other without a mother; for it is a question who was Servius's mother, and of Ancus's father there is not so much as any mention. The grammarian takes notice that *reapse* is used for *reipsa*, and *sepse* for *seipse*. And so every man makes his notes for his own purpose." And thus it was even at Triverton and Blichingly: where one half of the inhabitants conceived "The Star" to be a sort of Elijah's car, designed by the exemplary Peter to convey them ultimately to heaven; while others thought it a lucrative, but disgraceful speculation, dero-

gatory to the dignity of a functionary of the church ; and, as frequently happens, when the world are good enough to divide and differ in their opinions of an individual, both were wrong, for the Reverend Nathaniel Peter Hoskins had nothing on earth to do with it. No—his was by no means

“ The love of the moth for ‘ The Star,’ ”

but the love of dividends, debentures, and three per cents consols, unencumbered, save with a mortgage of Miss Macscrew.

Nine months had past away, in a series of constant attentions on his part to the fair Lavinia. Game, lampreys, oysters, char, and Dunstable larks, were the constant accompaniments of his visits in Lavender Lane : so that, like a file, he had literally eaten his way into the heart of Miss Macscrew. I use this simile, for nothing less could have had any effect upon so hard a substance as composed the anatomy of that amiable spinster’s left side.

Still, as midsummer advanced, “ the lovely young Lavinia ” absented herself from church, dreading least her Peter should be rash enough to attempt to win his wager ; but hearing from the neighbours that he had never even alluded to it, and being moreover much tempted by

some finery, her mother, whom she always designated by the endearing epithet of "*memma*," had sent her, she took courage, the last Sunday in June, of a very sultry day, to display it all. It consisted of a white, stamped, card-board bonnet, beautifully relieved with *the* black hollyhocks; a muslin dress, lined with daffadowndilly-coloured glazed calico; a muslin spencer, lined with the same material, only *green*: being exceedingly *warm*, she thought a goose-down tippet, from whence much of the down had absconded, showing here and there mangey patches of discoloured white calico, would have a cool effect; while a pair of wash-leather gloves, and nankin boots, laced up the front, completed this charming toilette. Parasol she had none, but she had what did duty as such,—a Chinese umbrella, round and flat at the top, like a mushroom, with a thick bamboo stick, which finished its likeness to the fungi genius. Thus equipped, she sallied from her domicile in Lavender Lane, up the High Street, down Silver Street, and so on to Cross Street, where the church was situated; and after having bestowed so much care on the decoration of her person, it must have been a great source of satisfaction to Miss Masscrew to think, that the fairest lady that ever walked in a royal 'cortège,' never attracted

half so much attention as she did, perambulating these thoroughfares of the flourishing town of Blichingly.

Arrived at the church door, she was surprised to see not only the Simmons's blue coach, the Tymmons's green fly, and the Doctor's gig, but also Lords Cheveley, Sudbury, and Shuffleton's carriages, with divers other unknown and anti-country looking equipages ; a stage coach also, full of ' the officers,' from Triverton, drove up, just as the last toll of the bell sounded.

" Bless me !" said Miss Macscrew, as she inflicted fruitless poundings on the stiff and rusty spring of the Chinese umbrella ; " all the world seem to have come to Blichingly church to-day, hope it's not a charity sermon ; quite ruinous so many of them ; however, I've got two *new* farthings that *memma* gave me, they'll look like sovereigns in the plate ;—like sovereigns, and I need not give again for some time." Here she renewed her attacks upon the umbrella, but in vain, so popping her head in at the church door, she beckoned to the sectoness, and consigning the celestial umbrella to her care, desired her to leave it in the vestry, till service was over, as it would not shut. The church was indeed crowded to excess, and notwithstanding the indecorum of such a proceeding, an ill sup-

pressed titter ran through the congregation, the moment Miss Macscrew appeared. Nor was it till she was fairly seated in Mrs. Tymmons's pew, which being immediately opposite the pulpit, was partly concealed by it, that this unhallowed mirth subsided.

Mrs. Tymmons looked redder, and fatter, and hotter than ever. Mr. T. had had his last bill of costs paid, by the Dowager Lady De Clifford, the week before, and had consequently got an up-in-the world sort of look, peculiar to attornies with fat faces, snub noses, and '*fine families*.'

Miss Seraphina had made every preparation for a faint, by taking off her gloves, untying the strings of her bonnet, placing a bottle of salts by the side of her prayer-book, and her shoulder in juxta-position with that of her brother Joseph, that he might be ready to receive her in his arms, when the catastrophe took place. Miss Isabella looked every five minutes at the painted window behind her, that '*the officers*' might have the pleasure of seeing her face. Mr. Rush looked, as usual, the essence of sentiment and sensibility, and even more martial than the officers, inasmuch, as having adopted the present fashion for the hair, he wore his firelocks on his shoulders. Master Grimstone, though in

church, was as busy as usual, for he had sucked the green strings of his velvet cap quite blue, rubbed off all the blacking of his shoes on his socks, ran a pin into his sister Isabella's arm, and double-dog's-eared all his mother's prayer book. Notwithstanding these trifling incidents, the service proceeded without any interruption, till a linnet flew in at the window, and lighting on one of Miss Macscrew's black hollyhocks, endeavoured to peck the artificial petals. This greatly amused '*the officers*,' and so excited the poetical imagination of Mr. Rush Tymmons, that he could not resist the strong impulse of noting down on the spot, in the flyleaf of his hymn book, some *very original* ideas, about the human heart being often lured on by false hopes and appearances, like the bird on Miss Macscrew's bonnet ! But even poetry must yield to preaching.

Mr. Hoskins ascended the pulpit ; Miss Macscrew fidgetted on her seat even more than usual. Mr. Rush closed the hymn book. Silence reigned around ; and at the end of a sufficiently solemn pause, after the prayer, Peter hemmed three times, and, in a distinct and sonorous voice, gave out the following text, keeping his eyes steadily fixed on Miss Macscrew.

“My beloved brethren, you will find in the lxxiii. Psalm, at the 23rd and 26th verses, these words:

“ ‘ Nevertheless I am continually with thee. Thou hast holden me by my right hand. Thou shalt guide me with Thy counsel, and afterwards receive me to glory. Whom have I in heaven but Thee, and there is none upon earth that I desire beside *Thee* ’ ”

Mr. Hoskins then proceeded, without any reference whatever to his text, to assure the whole of his congregation, that they were going, one and all, by the rail-road of sin, straight to the infernal regions, whose fires would consume them till the *end of eternity*.* He warned them also against the abomination of balls, and plays, which were likely to demoralize the neighbourhood during the approaching election, and the civil authorities be especially admonished against gormandizing dinners ; “for what saith St. Paul, ‘ Be ye not drunk with wine.’ And, oh ! my beloved friends, those midnight orgies called suppers, are of equal iniquity. Where the mayor and corporation, who have souls as well as bodies, though people might not believe it, go into the idolatries of the ancient Egyptians, and

* It was the late Edward Irving who first made this very interesting discovery in Chronology.

appear to worship *Ham* !” But this was the exciting and stirring part of Mr. Hoskins’ discourse : he soon grew soporific and consolatory ; he told them that “ heaven was a feather bed, that would never want making ! and faith a pillow, that would never want shaking ! ”* At this point he perceived that the whole congregation, (except Miss Macscrew, whom nervousness kept awake,) had suited the action to the word, and fallen fast asleep. This was the consummation he had so devoutly wished, and for which reason, he had assumed his most evangelical voice, and spun out his exordium to an hour’s length ; giving three groans, he resumed, “ Oh ! ye generation of vipers ! I speak unto you the words of everlasting life, and you sleep on your posts, in vain I say unto you, watch ; watch, for it is not the things of this world I bid you watch ; and ye are of the earth, earthy. Far different would it be, were I to pour into your ears, the tunings of sinful merriment ; you would not sleep nor slumber then, but rejoice, as did the soul of Saul, at the strains of the harp of David. Here then, oh ! children of wrath, prove to your God, how much less you attend to him,

* Ridiculous and far-fetched as this may appear, the author heard it nearly verbatim, with more, that is really too absurd to write, from a methodist preacher, about four months ago.

than to the meanest thing which one of his creatures have made !” So saying, Peter drew a kit from his pocket, and struck up, “Haste to the Wedding,”* which having completely awoke all who slept, he concluded with a solemn reprobation of his parishioners, for sleeping over his sermon, and waking to the sound of a fiddle.

Miss Macscrew fainted, for she felt as if her life had “sold out.” Not so Peter, “*To triumphe*” was written in every line of his countenance; he had caused it to be cautiously, but widely disseminated, that, on the last Sunday of the month, it was his intention to play his bold stroke for a wife, and accordingly the church had filled beyond his most sanguine expectations; and the congregation appeared as reluctant to separate, as they had been eager to assemble. ‘*The officers,*’ in particular, who were profuse in their offers of assistance to the amiable invalid, remarking at the same time, that it was rather anticipating events, to faint before the wedding, however orthodox and indispensable it was to do so during the ceremony. But, at length, with the aid of Miss Seraphina’s salts, Miss Isabella’s fan, and Mrs. Tymmons’s “Poor thing,” Miss Macscrew revived sufficiently to be conducted to the vestry by Mr.

* This occurrence really happened about 22 years ago.

Tymmons, who whispered, that he would draw up the marriage-settlements gratis ; but not to mention this to “ *Mrs. T.*,” as, *gentlemen* with large families could not exactly venture to tell everything to their wives, though there was not a more indulgent or forgiving wife anywhere than his ; “ Still, money is money, ma’am, as *you* know, and children are children, as *I* know,” concluded Mr. Tymmons, as he opened the vestry door, and placed Miss Macscrew in an arm-chair, where the fascinating Peter instantly fell at her feet, and seizing her hand, exclaimed,

“ Mine, *all* mine ! by all that’s fair ; and, even when the first raptures of the honeymoon are over, *augh* feel that the *stirling* qualities of my Lavinia, will make her as valuable in her Peter’s estimation, as she is now.”

Here Peter attempted to execute a kiss, but Miss Macscrew repulsed the vicious manifestation with maidenly propriety.

“ Ah ! my beloved Lavinia,” sighed Peter, “ you are right, I cannot lay claim to a *freehold*, until I have a *life interest* : give me, then, the dividend of a promise, and tell me when you will transmute Miss Macscrew into Mrs. Hoskins ? this day-week ? shall I say this day-week ? or rather, *will you* say this day-week ?”

“ Oh ! this day-week such a short time,

such a very short time, you know : shan't be able to write to *memma* : generally write to her by sending a newspaper ; and seeing it directed by me, she knows I'm well, which is quite satisfactory."

" Well, then, let us send mamma a newspaper, with our marriage in it," suggested Peter, " and then she'll know that you're not only well, but, what is more, extraordinary well married !"

" Oh, but *memma* might be angry—angry, you know, if I did not tell her first."

" Well, then, you must assure her that you never did so before, and *I* sincerely hope, never will do so again ; and, after that, I'm sure she cannot be so unreasonable, as to continue angry," urged Peter.

" But, tell me," said Miss Macscrew, with a vain effort to waive the subject, " tell me, when your first name is Nathaniel, why everybody calls you Peter ?"

" Why, when *augh* was young, you must know, *augh* was a sad pickle, and my brothers and sisters nick-named me Salt Petre ; so, never having been at Eton, *augh* did not care for the *salt*, you see, but have retained the name of Peter ever since ; and, now having told you why I am called Peter, tell me, thou golden dream of all my hopes, when I may call *you mine*."

Here a knocking was heard at the door, and, Peter thinking it might be the clerk, said in his parochial voice,

“Enter beloved.”

But it was only Mrs. Tymmons, Miss Seraphina, and Miss Isabella Tymmons, Messieurs Joseph and Rush Tymmons, and Master Grimstone Tymmons, who, all and each, began interceding with Miss Macscrew for their cousin Peter, whom, they could bear witness, had fairly won her on her own terms.

Whether it was, that she feared his resorting to legal and compulsory measures in the event of her refusing, or an habitual dislike to being asked for anything ; but, in less than a quarter of an hour, Miss Macscrew had acceded to Peter’s proposals, of espousing him on the following Monday, and Mrs. Tymmons, who understood those sort of things, abdicated the *fly* in favour of the bride and bridegroom elect, who returned tête-à-tête to Lavender Lane, to arrange all farther preliminaries ; the first of which was, to write to a Mrs. Crump, the proprietor of furnished apartments in Birmingham, to secure them on the wedding-day, Mr. Hoskins having business in that town, and not liking at the first onset to frighten his bride by the extravagance of going to an hotel.

All unnecessary delays he had carefully avoided, by having taken the precaution to get Mr. Tymmons to draw up the marriage-settlements in advance, leaving certain interstices to be filled up with whatever stipulations he might be able to extort from Miss Macscrew, or she should insist upon from him.

And, now we will leave Miss Macscrew to prepare her bridal rags, and Peter to spend her money in imagination, while we pay a visit to Mrs. Stokes, and find out what has happened in Blichingly since we were last there. Cheveley had that morning accidentally gone to Blichingly church, not in the least aware of Mr. Hoskins's intended disgraceful exhibition, nor could he participate in the excessive mirth it occasioned, as he felt how much religion was outraged, and decency violated, by such an indecorous proceeding, and thought Mr. Hoskins deserved to be stripped of his gown.

Having ordered the carriage to put up at "The De Clifford Arms," according to the promise he had made Mrs. Stokes in Lee's cottage; he had given orders that it should remain there, and he would walk on to the inn, for Cheveley had an innate love for English villages, and never felt less unhappy than when he was exploring them.

When he arrived at the De Clifford Arms, Richard Brindal was sitting on a bench outside the door, with a pipe in his mouth, a pot of porter beside him, and the "Triverton Independant," in his hand, which he was spelling over to himself aloud. "The old story," muttered he, as Cheveley entered the inn, "Nothing but jails and gibbets for the poor, and yet they tell us a deal about liberty at the '*lections* ; the liberty o'scragging us poor folks I '*spose* they means."

But where was Mrs. Stokes? The day that she had so long wished for, hoped for, dreamt of, had at length arrived. Lord Cheveley's horses stood in her stable, his carriage in her yard, and himself in her house ; then where was she ? why, in a very unusual place, and occupied in a very unusual manner,—with her arms round her husband's neck, sobbing upon his shoulder. When Cheveley stood before them, John Stokes perpetrated sundry bows, his right foot moving to and fro, like the pendulum of a clock, and propping his wife up to the right, till she regained a perpendicular position, he whispered,

"My dear, the *marcus*."

But, even these magic words produced no greater effect than to make Mrs. Stokes dry her eyes hurriedly, with the corner of her apron, and exclaim, wrniging her hands passionately,

“My lord, they no more took the things than you did; it’s all a piece of wickedness, to ruin them. Try, try, for Heaven’s sake! my lord, to get them righted.”

“Get who righted?” asked Cheveley. “I’m sorry to see you so distressed; but let me know the cause of it, and perhaps I may serve you.”

“There, Nancy, don’t take on so; you hear his lordship’s goodness: sit down, and I’ll tell him the rights on it. You must know, my lord,” continued Stokes, “that last Monday Lord De Clifford and the old lady came down to the park, and there was a great many different work-people, masons, carpenters, and such-like, had up there, to do odd jobs about the place. Among others, old Lee was sent for, to do something to a window-frame in Mrs. Frump’s room: this made him very angry, and he went himself up to Mr. Grindall at the park, and told him, that never, as long as he lived, would he handle a hammer for Lord De Clifford or his mother, unless it was to knock a nail in their coffins,—and *that* he’d do with pleasure. Grindall called him an impertinent old rascal, and told him never to come near the place again. Now your lordship will please to observe, that it was in the audit-room this took place, and the audit-room is at the foot of the back stairs leading to Mrs.

Frump's room. Well, the next day there was a hue and cry over all the place, that a watch of the old lady's, and two diamond shirt-buttons of my lord's, had been stolen out of Mrs. Frump's room, where all my lord's and lady's things were laying at sixes and sevens, half unpacked. Grindall instantly procured a search-warrant ; and not only all the houses of the work-people, but every house in the village, not excepting mine, was ransacked for the lost things :—but, not to keep your lordship too long, I'm now coming to the upshot of the story. My missus was drinking tea with Mary Lee last Thursday evening ; she was sitting at work, and the old man was reading, when the officers, with Grindall at their head, walked into the cottage. Lee had heard of the other houses being searched, and therefore was not surprised at seeing them ; but, without so much as looking at Grindall, rose up, and civilly gave all his keys to the officers, telling Mary to leave the room ; but she only stood the nearer to her father, while the child clung to her as if it was frightened, but never said one word, though it looked every now and then from behind its mother at the strange men. Nancy says it was enough to turn a stone to down. Well, they searched the whole house, and nothing could they find ; but when they were going

away, ‘ You have forgotten to look in the old walnut-tree desk, that I keep my bills in,’ said Lee; at this Grindall sprung forward, but Lee pushed him back, saying, ‘ *he* should not lay a finger on any thing belonging to him:’ in doing this, Grindall’s foot slipped, and he fell with his head against the leg of a table, but was not much hurt, though he threatened to have the law of Lee, for what he called an assault; but even the officers declared that there had been no such thing, and then went on to open the desk;—when, turning every thing out, what should they find but the watch and the diamond buttons! at which no one looked surprised but Nancy and Lee himself; but he more than her; for he seemed as if the sight on ’em turned him to stone. Mary looked wild-like for a few minutes; but suddenly flashing, as she does, poor thing! when she gets one of her mad fits, she broke from the child’s arm, and seizing Grindall’s arm, she shrieked out, ‘ It’s all a vile, vile plot; but he shall not ruin my poor old father, as he has ruined me; he never took the things. If he *must* say, and will have it that they were brought here by any of us, it was *I* that stole them. Drag me to prison then, or where you please, but touch *him* on your peril;’ and poor Mary sank on the ground, and clasped her father’s

feet. But Grindall's fit for his work ; for he answered her with a sneer, ' No, no, miss, we ain't going to part ye ; you shall both have the same privileges, and be comfortably lodged in Triverton gaol together.'

" So, to make a long story short, my lord, the poor old man, his daughter, and grandchild, were that very night taken to prison, where they are all likely to lie for the next three months, till the ' sizes come on. And my firm belief is," concluded Stokes, striking the table with his clenched hand, " that Lee no more stole the things than I did."

" No, nor than his lordship did," sobbed Mrs. Stokes.

" Then who do you suppose was wicked enough to place the things in Lee's desk ?" asked Cheveley.

" The devil, or some one as bad, my lord, I should say, replied Stokes."

" I never thought downright bad of Lord De Clifford till now," said Mrs. Stokes ; " but, God forgive me ! I can't help thinking, with poor Mary, that it's all a diabolical plot of his, to get them out of the way."

" I should hope," said Cheveley, " that he was incapable of such wickedness, and that the mystery—for mystery there evidently is—will soon

be solved, to the clearing of those poor Lees' characters as well as his. But one thing I don't comprehend : how it was, that Mary Lee fell a victim to Lord De Clifford's arts ; for surely his personal appearance must have been too well known at Blichingley, not to have been recognized through the trifling disguise of a mere change of dress."

"No, there it is, my lord," said Stokes ; "he never was here since he had been a very little child, till that time he first saw poor Mary. None of us knew his appearance ; for he used to go all about the village in that farmer's dress, and even come and smoke in our bar ; and 'twas not till just before he went abroad, that I saw him as Lord De Clifford, and thought I never saw such a likeness in all my life to William Dale ! but till I saw his letters to Mary, signed William Dale, and compared them with those to me signed De Clifford, I never could believe that they were one and the same person. But I never knew a good Grimstone yet ; they're like the foxes' cubs, there's not a best amongst them."

"Poor people !" said Cheveley, musingly ; "what prison did you say they were in ?"

"Triverton, my lord."

"Well, have the goodness to order my carriage ; I'll see if anything can be done for them."

“ God bless you for that, my lord,” said Mrs. Stokes, “ and for what you have already done for them.”

As soon as the carriage was ready, Cheveley departed, bidding Mrs. Stokes keep up her spirits, as he was sure that God would not long allow the innocent to suffer for the guilty; and of the innocence of the Lees he did not entertain the least doubt.

“ How many there are in this world,” thought Cheveley, as the carriage rolled on to Triverton, “ who upon circumstantial evidence would be ready to condemn this poor old man and his daughter, never recollecting that misfortunes are like mice; and that where one has crept in, hundreds are sure to follow: for in the moral, as in the material world,

‘ The great first cause’ is always ‘ least understood.’

“ Mary Lee, from having been betrayed by the machinations of a heartless profligate, is, of course, looked upon, by the discriminating portion of society, as capable of anything and everything, while the author of her misery struts unsuspected and uncensured through the world. Her father, being deserted and shunned, on the strength of his daughter’s seeming dereliction from virtue, by all who had been his companions,

receives kindness from none but gipseys and outcasts ; consequently, as evil communications proverbially corrupt good manners, he must, of necessity, have degenerated into a thief and a felon ! Oh, world ! world ! how weary I am of your false judgments ; your envy, malice, hatred, and uncharitableness ; your hollowness and your hypocrisy ; your fair words and your foul deeds ; your ovations to the strong, and your oppressions to the weak ; your libellous defamations of the unprotected, and your lying defences of the powerful. If this be human nature, I'd rather be a dog, and beg to it, than be a man and bear it."

Here the carriage stopped before the door of the town-hall at Triverton, which was at the opposite side of the market-place to the gaol, which stood near the abbey, into which well-dressed and happy looking people of all ages were flocking to three-o'clock prayers. Cheveley got out, and walked across to the prison, whose high and ponderous walls seemed saturated with gloom, beyond the power of the summer sun and balmy air to dissipate. In answer to Cheveley's knock, the door turned slowly on its hinges, and the porter inquired his business.

"Is there not an old man and his daughter here of the name of Lee?" asked he.

“ I really don't know, sir, but I'll ask the gaoler, if you'll step in.”

And accordingly he walked into the large empty court, where every now and then indistinct yells of boisterous mirth broke upon the silence, from the other side of the building. During the few minutes that the porter was absent, a knock came to the door, which being repeated, as though the applicant was impatient, Cheveley tried to open it, but not understanding its mysteries, was obliged to desist till the porter returned, which he did almost immediately, announcing that the gaoler would come in a minute; as he was speaking, the knock was repeated still louder than before, and upon opening it, perceiving no one but a little ragged boy, with sunburnt rosy cheeks, black wicked-looking eyes, no shoes or stockings, a newly-peeled switch in one hand, and a small basket in the other, while round his head was the rim of what had once been a blue cloth cap, the porter's dignity felt somewhat scandalized at having been hurried into attending to so insignificant an intruder, and eyeing Freddy Flips, (for he it was who had come as ambassador from Madge Brindal) exclaimed, “ Hey day ! great cry, and little wool, truly; what may you want, you cat-fed young knave ?”

“ I want to see John Lee, if you please, sir, or his daughter Mary.”

“ And what do you want to see them for, my boy ?” asked Cheveley, in a kind voice.

Here Freddy, who in general had impudence enough at his command to have supplied all Ireland, looked down at his shoeless feet, and began splitting the switch he held into ribbons, as he replied, in a low voice, never once raising his eyes—

“ I’ve a letter and some flowers, sir, for Mary from Madge, some cherries for little William, and—and a bone for Wasp.”

“ Well,” said Cheveley, smiling, “ will you trust these things with me, as I am going to see them, and perhaps you would come back in an hour, in case there should be any answer to the letter ?”

“ And will you really, sir,” said the boy, looking up in Cheveley’s face delightedly, as he extended the basket towards him, “ will you really take charge of them ?”

“ I will.”

“ The flowers for Mary ?”

“ Yes.”

“ And the cherries for William ?”

“ Yes.”

“ And the bone for the dog, too ?”

“ Yes—and the bone for the dog, too,” said Cheveley, smiling, as he took the basket.

“ Thank you, sir,” said Freddy ; “ I’m sure it’s very kind of you, and I’ll be back in an hour.’ So saying, he bounded off like a will-o’-the-wisp, leaving Cheveley to speak to the gaoler, who had just hobbled up ; for, from the pottle-deep potations of years, he was troubled with the gout. Seeing a gentleman, (a class in whom honest Davie Darby delighted, for his pockets always felt the heavier, and his heart, ay, and, for company’s sake, his head too, the lighter, after their visits to the prison) began bowing most obsequiously, when Cheveley begged to be conducted to Lee’s cell.

As Davie limped on before, he began pointing out to his companion all the *comforts* of the prison. “ There, sir, be so good as to look through this here side of the gallery, and you’ll see the tread-mill—fine wholesome exercise as ever was ; and out *yander* is the court where the prisoners *amuse theirselves* when they’re tired o’ work ; and these here large baskets of bread and cheese *is* for the prisoners’ suppers. So you see, sir, they’ve every comfort, if they would but think so, and what’s more, there’s nothing *promiscus* or *oncertain* about it, for they’re sure of the same to-morrow as they have

to-day, and so on *reglar*, till they're turned off, and then, *in* course, there's an end of all their wants. As I often tell them, and I'm sure the chaplain could'nt talk to them more *hedifying* like, I says to 'em, says I, 'You transportable, ill-favoured gibbetarians—you—how happy you ought to be that you're free-born Englishmen, and live in a country where *sich* gaols *is pervided* for you as this.' But lor ! sir, they're so hardened, that it makes no more impression on them, than if I was to talk to the wall, or this bunch of keys ; howsomdever, I does my duty, and it's a satisfaction when one knows that one's conscience has no chance of escape. A prison's the place to larn the world in, for here we know the worst as can happen, and that's what *I* calls the greatest happiness in life."

Here Davie was obliged to take breath, and Cheveley had, at length, an opportunity of making some inquiries about the Lees.

"I hope," said he, "that this poor old man, and his daughter, are as comfortably lodged, as the place they are in, will allow."

"For that matter, sir," replied Davie, "comfortable lodgings are not to be had for nothing in prison, any more than out of it ; and them as has nothing, can't expect nothing, which is but reasonable, you'll allow, sir."

“ Well, but how much would it cost a-week, to provide them with good food, and good beds, while they remain in prison ?”

Here Davie began to consider, not what would come under the denomination of either, but how much, as he himself termed it in his mental calculations, he could *stick* Cheveley for.

“ Why, let me see, there’s two on ’em, the old man, and the young gal. Now there’s nothing at all vacant in the way of apartments just now, unless wife and I was to give up two of our own rooms, which would be particklar inconvenient, and therefore come more expensive, you see, sir.”

Cheveley did see clearly Mr. Darby’s drift, but merely replied,

“ Allowing all that,—in a word, how much would it be ?”

“ Why, sir, to feed ’em too, I could not do it under four guineas a week.”

“ Could I see the rooms you mean to give them ?”

“ Yes, sir, certainly, if you’ll take the trouble of turning back again ; the house you may see from this, there, that small house next the Governor’s across the court,” said Davie, pointing to it, with his middle finger ; “ delightful sitivation too, sir ; for when the Judges and

barristers is down at the 'sises, we can hear them laughing and carousing at dinner, quite plain, as our house is at the back of the 'Golden Fleece,' where they always puts up."

"These must be delightful sounds, indeed, to the poor prisoners," said Cheveley, smiling.

"To be sure they must, sir," assented Davie, "and this makes the apartments well worth half a guinea a week more, to any prisaner that's fortunate enough to get 'em."

"Very likely, but I think four guineas a week was what you said."

"Yes, yes, by all means, sir, and I never goes back from my word."

Here they arrived at Mr. Darby's door. Upon that gentleman's lifting the latch, he found his better half fast asleep, in a high-backed arm chair, a bible on her lap, turned upside down, and a black cat with a red collar, also indulging in a siesta, on her shoulder. On a round three-legged oak table before her, a tray, with two cups on it, was laid for tea, and the kettle was boiling clamorously. Yet, notwithstanding these preparations for the Chinese beverage, there was a genial odour of Geneva, (the spirit not the waters), diffused through the whole apartment, that was peculiarly oppressive to those who were not accustomed to it. The decorations of the room

consisted of coloured paper fly traps, suspended from the ceiling, and two or three ears of Indian corn, pumpkins, ostrich eggs, and peacock's feathers, diversified the range of old teapots and cups, that graced the chimney-piece, with festoons of birds' eggs, branching from each side of a large silver watch, that hung from a nail, in the centre of the wall over the chimney-piece. All round the walls were pinned, 'last dying speeches,' and woodcuts of celebrated murderers and house-breakers; while on the top of a high chest of drawers, that stood behind, or rather by the side of a small door, that opened upon a flight of narrow stairs, leading to the upper apartments, was a cast of Thurtell, and the bone of one of the pork chops he had eaten after murdering Ware.

"Betty, I say, Betty," cried Mr. Darby, chucking Mrs. D. under the chin, till she woke with the pain of biting her own tongue, "it's too soon to lock up for the night yet; get up and show this *gemmlan* the rooms, he wants them for some prisoners."

And as Mrs. Darby curtsied herself quite awake, her husband gave her a telegraphic look, pointing with his thumb over his shoulder at Cheveley, which she perfectly understood to mean, "I've done him."

She consequently redoubled her civilities as she went up stairs before him, to show the rooms, which were small, and contained a bed in each, as clean as white dimity curtains, and well scrubbed floors, could make them, while, outside the windows, were rows of green flower pots containing balsams and mignonette, which gave the rooms a fresh and cheerful appearance, especially as the windows were perfectly bright and clean.

“Let me see,” said Cheveley, “the assizes will not be till September.”

“Yes, sure, sir,” curtseyed Mrs Darby.

“And four guineas a week is sixteen guineas a month,” resumed Cheveley: “well, here is the first month in advance,” and as he threw the money down upon the table, Mr. Darby nimbly transferred it to his own pocket, though not without the ceremony of bowing over every coin, his wife backing each bow with a curtsey.

“I shall call here occasionally, to see how these poor people get on,” said Cheveley, “and if they are not well cared for in every way, remember I shall deduct one third from the next month’s rent.”

“Oh sir !” exclaimed Mrs. Darby, raising her hands and eyes to the ceiling, as if shocked at any one being able to suspect her of not

doing every thing that was right; "you may depend no one ever wants for *nothing* in *this* house!"

"Well, I hope not," said Cheveley. "But now shew me the way to Lee's cell, and let these rooms be got ready for them immediately, as I should like to see them settled in them before I go."

"It shall be done, sir," said Mrs. Darby, as Cheveley walked away with her husband.

After retracing their steps through the prison, and ascending one story higher than they had done before, Davie stopped before a small door, and detaching the ponderous bunch of keys from his girdle, selected the key belonging to it, which, as it turned in the rusty wards, echoed dismally through the corridor.

"Have the goodness to leave us for half an hour," said Cheveley to Darby, as he opened the door.

"Very good, sir," replied the latter, closing it again, and locking it from without. Notwithstanding the noise the opening and shutting of the door had made, Cheveley stood for a few seconds within the cell without any of the inmates having moved. The straggling and half-intercepted rays of light that streamed athwart the gloom from the high narrow grating, near

the cieling, made it difficult at first to distinguish the objects they scarcely served to reveal. In one corner was a straw pallet, on which lay Mary Lee's child, sleeping as calmly as if a prison was but another sort of cradle, with one arm round Wasp's neck. The dog turned his glaring eyes towards the door as it opened, but looked too broken-hearted to bark, merely turning round and licking the child's cheek; and then, with a low moan, curling itself up again, and silently following Cheveley with his eyes, which, in the darkness, looked like large topazes. Near a small table, his elbow leaning on it, and his face shaded by his hand, sat John Lee, while at his feet sat Mary, her face buried in his lap. Neither of them spoke nor moved; and Cheveley was so affected by the scene before him, that it was some minutes before he could do so either.

"Lee," said he at length, "this is a grievous business; I sincerely believe you have no right to be here. Tell me how it all happened, and perhaps I may be able to serve you."

The old man raised his head slowly, and said bitterly, "Serve me! yes, as others have served me and that is well. What more does he want?—our lives?—he will have them. The same hands he got to steal, in order to ruin us, he can get to lie, in order to murder us; is not that

enough? Must he have usurious thanks upon the insult of proffered services?—services from him—no, no! the very devil himself does not give sin such high wages.” So saying, he buried his face again in his hands.

“ Indeed you mistake,” said Cheveley, in even a kinder tone than before; “ I come from no one, but merely wish, as a matter of common justice, to see you righted, and help you, if I can.”

“ Father,” said Mary, raising her head, and looking imploringly up in his face, “ listen to him; he has a kind voice, and perhaps God at last may have sent us a friend.”

“ Look at me,” said Cheveley, “ do you not remember me? You once did some work for me—last March, I think it was—at Cheveley.”

“ Remember you, my lord,” cried the old man, rising, “ I have not met with so much kindness, that I should be likely to forget yours; but it is too good of you to come to such a place as this;” and as he spoke, he placed the chair for Cheveley that he had been sitting on; the latter, however, declined it, by seating himself upon the table.

“ Oh, sir!—my lord!—save him! Indeed, indeed, he is innocent; he never took those

things !” cried Mary, passionately flinging herself at Cheveley’s feet, who, as he raised her, and begged of her to calm herself, said,

“ I feel convinced he never did ; and it is this conviction that has brought me here, as I want to have a statement of the whole business from yourselves.”

The old man then proceeded to give him almost verbatim the same account of the officers searching his cottage, and the manner in which he was taken to prison, as Stokes had done ; adding, as he concluded,

“ And now, so help me God, sir, I know no more how the things came there, nor who placed them there, than you do ; and this is as true as death ; and yet it must be some one well acquainted with my house that hid them where they were.”

“ But in that case, who do you know that you can suspect bears you such ill will ?” asked Cheveley.

“ There it is, my lord ; the only person who knows every turn about my cottage, is one whose regard and fidelity to me I would vouch for with my life—one Madge Brindal, a gipsy girl, whom your lordship may remember brought you to our cottage.”

Cheveley did remember, and the conversation

he had overheard among the ruins also flashed across him; but then, whatever light he placed that in, it was evident that nothing hostile to the Lees could be gleaned from it. But, again, there was another person beside Madge concerned in it, a man—who, or what could he be? And here he became lost in fruitless conjectures, as he asked,

“Is there no one else that you can think of?—do no men ever come and see you, and are consequently acquainted with the arrangements of your house, and might have placed the things in your desk?”

“None, my lord—at least, none that hate me enough to injure me so much; for except my own sons, John Stokes, and Miles Datchet, the captain of a merchantman, are the only men who have darkened my doors these twelvemonths past. Oh! no, no! it was none of my companions that have done it.”

“Who, then, *do* you suspect? for yourself being guiltless, some one must be guilty.”

“Who should I suspect, but the villain who first robbed me of what I loved more than my life—my child, my poor Mary; and having stolen her good name, he now kindly filches mine, that they may go together. But the reason is plain,” continued the old man, vehemently

baring his breast, and gasping as he spoke : “ he thought, forsooth, I’d tell the people what a paragon he was, and prove that those who break all laws, are not quite fit to make them. And ’tis better, and fitter, and wiser, that twenty poor wretches like me should rot in a gaol, or be branded as felons, than that one fine gentleman like my Lord De Clifford should lose an election !”

“ Father,” said Mary, smoothing down the old man’s silver hair, that the wind from the grating was blowing about, “ do sit out of the draught ; you are so warm, you will catch cold.”

“ Do come farther this way,” urged Cheveley, as Lee rocked himself to and fro in his chair, naturally wrought to a great pitch of excitement, at the thought of all he had endured, and was still likely to endure. “ Do come farther this way, for I have a letter for you, that a boy gave me at the gate ; perhaps it may contain some good news ; and you will see to read it better over here ; and this basket I was to give to you,” added Cheveley, handing it to Mary ; “ and I was to be sure and say that part of its contents were for the little dog.”

“ Thank you, my lord,” said Mary, “ I’m sorry any one should have given you so much trouble ; how can we ever thank you for all your goodness to us ?”

“By not desponding too much, and recollecting, that God never forsakes, even when he most tries us: everything proves to us, that truth is one of the highest attributes of the Almighty; for, being opposed as it is on all sides, and the semblance of truth so often passing for the reality, through the medium of plausible appearances; yet, so really powerful and unerring is its operation, that though it may lie hid in darkness for ever so long a time,—like the sun, under a cloud, it eventually struggles through it, and triumphantly proclaims its own glory.”

“True, true, my lord, you are right, God bless you for what you say, and forgive me for repining, as I do; but mine is a hard—hard lot to bear, and, I sometimes think, I am too old for heavy burdens now.”

“Father,” said Mary, brushing the tears away from her eyes, “shall I read that letter for you?”

“Do, child, and tell me what it’s about, and who it’s from, but it is encroaching upon your lordship’s goodness to let you remain in this dismal place, it is bad enough for those who are obliged to do so.”

“That is neither you, nor I,” said Cheveley, “So I hope you’ll not be very sorry to leave it.”

“Ah, my lord,” said the old man, shaking his

head, "Two long months won't see me out of it."

"But a few short minutes may," said Cheveley, "For I have secured tolerable rooms for you in the jailor's house, where you will at least have fresh air and sunshine."

Lee stared at him for a moment as if he did not quite understand him, and then bursting into tears, exclaimed, "Oh, my lord, you are too—too good to us, what can I say to you? nothing; for, when the heart is full, words are empty; may God Almighty bless you,—and he will."

"One thing you must do for me," said Cheveley. "Don't let the jailor know who I am, or any one, that I have been to see you. Now, remember, if any trash gets into the papers about it, I shall be seriously angry."

"I would not for the world make you so," said the old man; "but it is hard to burst with gratitude, and not be allowed to tell it."

"Yes, we may tell it to God, father," sobbed Mary, throwing her arms round his neck, "and he will repay it, though we cannot."

"Come, come," said Cheveley, who felt a choking sensation in his throat, "the jailor will be here presently, and you had better read your letter before he comes, as the boy who

brought it is to return for an answer in an hour."

"It is from Madge Brindal, father," said Mary, when she had read it; "and, though she is as full of hope as ever, and mysterious assurances that all will go well, yet she says, that—that—I cannot name him—pretends there is a large diamond missing out of one of the buttons."

"Does he? ah! well, it's clear there is no stone as yet missing out of his heart," cried he, with a short husky laugh.

Here the grating of the key in the lock of the door, announced Darby's return; who, bowing obsequiously as he entered, and albeit, contrary to his usual custom, leaving the door wide open after him, said, the "'Partments *was* quite ready for *Mister Lee*, and, '*praps* the *gemlen* would be so good as to go with him just to see *as they was* all *conformable*."

"Remember," whispered Cheveley, to the old man, "no more lordships."

"Very well, sir," replied Lee, aloud.

"Now, *Miss*," said Davie, "push on if *you* please, I'll carry the *babby* for you, or any other luggage you may have; that's the best of our lodgings, there's so little trouble in packing up when the tenants *comes* to move out of them:—beg your pardon, *Mister Lee*, I'll *jist* step on with that ere trunk of your's; thank you, sir, that's the time of day."

Mary took her child in one arm, and gave the other to her father. Mr. Darby slung the trunk across his left shoulder, and took a bundle in his right hand, while Wasp kept close at his heels, giving them an occasional snap whenever he could spare time from his avocation of looking up at the trunk, which, he seemed sadly afraid would either evade his *surveillance* by flying away with Davie, or Davie with it; neither of which catastrophes, we are happy to say, took place.

Mrs. Darby had got tea ready; and, although it was a broiling-hot day in June, her ideas of comfort being inseparably connected with heat, she had a large yellow-fever-looking plate of hot buttered toast ready also,—and, in short, was motherly and affectionate to Mary, and grandmotherly to the child in the extreme; having attempted its life with a green apple before it was in the house five minutes.

Cheveley's only wish now was, that she would *not* attend to the Lees, but leave them to themselves; which, having got her to promise, he departed, amid the silent, but fervent blessings of both father and daughter; which, even had they been breathed aloud, could not have drowned the awful imprecations, demoniac laughter, and piteous lamentations that fell upon his ear and curdled his blood, as he crossed the court to regain the street.

CHAPTER X.

“ Tel brille au second rang qui s'éclipse au premier.”

“ I do pity unlearned gentlemen on a rainy day.”

Lord Falkland.

“ ——— Moi, voyez-vous, Monsieur l'Essoufflé, je n'ai point de ces intrigues qui font les amis, et les amis qui font applaudir.”—*Le Bénéficiaire, Comédie.*

Mrs. Major Fitzagony's fly coming up ;
Mrs. Colonel Pilaw's chair—she stays to sup ;
Dear ! the mayor's old fat wife has flown in a rage,
And thrown all the cards at the head of Miss Page ;
Mr. Lush, very drunk, enacts King Cambyzes,
While his partner's engaged in the myst'ries of *Ices*.

It was the beginning of September, a month sacred to geese, game, and garrulity, inasmuch as people assemble to eat and talk in country-houses ; and the Dowager Lady De Clifford's, for a wonder, was full among others ; but, it was in the very thick of the Triverton election, and, at the end of the second day, the poll stood thus :

De Clifford	-	-	-	474
Dinely	-	-	-	456
Hobson	-	-	-	312

Gentlemen with sound lungs, and a talent for shaking hands, are invaluable at an election; consequently, Lord De Clifford had imported Messieurs Fuzboz, Feedwell, and De Rivoli, who had recently arrived in England, and was extremely anxious to see an election; Major Nonplus was also retained as receiver-general, for his lordship knew, by experience, that a great deal of unpopularity is often incurred, in going the rounds, by not being able to consume *all* the stale cake, Cape Madeira, and sausage (!) sandwiches, that are set before popular candidates at *all* the houses: here, then, the gallant major was invaluable, for he had that sort of gastronomic vanity, that could swallow *anything* and *everything*; and in the art of kissing children, he could not have been excelled by a foundling-hospital nurse. Yet, notwithstanding this legion of able coadjutors, Lord De Clifford had a great deal to contend with. In the first place, Triverton swarmed with dissenters. To be sure, as far as pulling down the established church went, and railing at the clergy, he got on extremely well, but then Lord Albert Dinely had stolen a march upon him, by presenting the Anabaptists with a large stone bason, big enough for a donkey to bathe in; and a handsome and extensive tankard

to the Muggletonians, for their *love feasts* : this gave Lord Albert a decided 'vantage ground. Next, his mother was by no means too well pleased to have so many people to feed and fawn upon, and it was absolutely necessary to keep her in good humour. And last, though not least, that very evening there was to be a *dance* at the Tymmons's, to which he and his whole party *must* go, and never once relax in his most assiduous "To solicit the honour of your vote and interest" manner; then the next day came the election dinner, at which a ten years' stock of patience and patriotism would be required. All this was very trying certainly, but there was a gleam of sunshine through it all—the Lees were safely secured, beyond the power of tormenting him. The morning of his second day's canvassing had commenced with a deluge of rain, which continued the whole day; therefore his 'aides-de-camp' had been reduced to Fuzboz and Major Nonplus: as Monsieur De Rivoli thought that rain, accompanied with fog, was exceedingly injurious to the complexion, from the fact of its making people bilious; and Mr. Feedwell declared, that going out in the wet always made him feel like a fungus, and that he should not be able to eat a morsel at the dinner the next day, or annihilate the young

ladies that evening, if he tampered with himself in the morning ; consequently, he and Monsieur De Rivoli remained ‘tête-à-tête’ the whole day, stretched on opposite sofas, each giving the other to understand, that it was utterly impossible *he* ever could have made a conquest.

It was about half-past five when Lord De Clifford returned, not so well pleased with his second day’s canvass as he had been with the first, on account of Lord Albert’s increasing popularity with the dissenters. In any dilemma he was (with a degree of filial affection that was truly amiable) in the habit of consulting his mother’s judgment ; and accordingly, though he knew she was not fond of being disturbed when Frump was enacting the part of the Graces, he repaired to her dressing-room. No sooner had his knock been answered, by a permission to come in, than Frump (who had she been ‘valet de chambre’ even to Napoleon, would have still kept him a hero to her in spite of himself) immediately withdrew.

“ Well, my dear, how is the poll ? I hear you got on *vaustly* well to-day.

“ Pretty well, my dear ma’am ; but those d—d methodists plague me. Dinely has made himself so devilish popular with them. I wish you could strike out something, anything, that

would seem religious, that we might do. *You* understand those sort of things, my dear ma'am. Do devise something that would tell *permanently* amongst them."

"'Pon my word, my dear," replied the dowager, assuming a thoughtful attitude, by placing the two fore fingers of her right hand to her temple, under the frizette, and the other two on her chin, "it's difficult to know what to do—let me see—oh, I'll tell you, suppose I make the servants fast twice a week."

"Now really, my dear ma'am, that's not a bad idea; but, as I always say, I know no one in point of cleverness to compare to you."

"Very just observation, my dear; and if every one had the sense to think so, the world would go on a great deal better than it does."

"But now," resumed Lord De Clifford, affectionately taking his mother's hand, "I have a *very, very* great favour to ask you: a woman of superior understanding like you, must know that private feelings should always yield to public good.

"Lord! my dear," interrupted the dowager, who began to fear that her son was going to ask for more money for his election, "you alarm me by such a long preamble; can't you come to the *pint* at once? But however, I think it right to

tell you before-hand, if it's any thing about politics, I'm inexorable; for you know I'm a Tory, as I think every *landed proprietor* ought to be. And these here Radicals are such lords of the creation, that let them commit what trespasses they will, there's no warning them off the premises; and Grindall tells me he has more trouble with them than enough. No, no, my dear, I really cannot encourage Radicalism, and the rights of the people, and all that sort of thing, even to gain you your election; for I always had that sort of independent spirit about me, like my mother, that when I wanted nothing, I never would put myself out of the way for any one; and I must say I'm very glad to hear that Radical fellow Hobson is the last on the poll."

"What I was going to ask you, my dear ma'am, has nothing on earth to do with politics, but may have a great deal to do with making me popular, or the reverse."

"Oh, my dear, that's quite another affair; what is it?"

"Why, that d—d fellow Hoskins is in London, so we shan't be annoyed by the sight of him; but his wife, old Macscrew that was, is to be at the Tymmons's to-night, and I want you to be civil to her. You know she lent Herbert two thousand pounds last year, though, having

got that appointment in Russia, he has not wanted it for his election; but still it would be very impolitic in us to quarrel with her, especially just at this crisis; and as every one knows how infamously Hoskins has behaved to you, your noticing his wife will appear doubly magnanimous; and, indeed, mark more strongly your disapprobation of him, of whom you need never at any period take the slightest notice."

"Well, my dear, there is some sense in your last observation; but really I have no patience with the old fool for marrying that fellow."

"Oh, d—n it, I don't know, my dear ma'am; any man is good enough for any woman, always excepting the solitary instance of yourself and my father."

"Certainly, my dear; a woman of spirit, courage, and every feminine virtue, was vaustly thrown away upon him. But you had better go and dress, for we dine at half-past six, on account of this here tiresome party at the Tymmons's."

"Then you will be civil to Mrs. Hoskins to-night?"

"Oh, certainly, as far as asking her how she does, and how she came to make such a fool of herself, goes. Be so good, my dear, as to pull that bell, as you go by, for Frump."

As soon as Frump re-appeared, her ladyship

completed her toilette, which consisted of a claret-coloured gros de Naples dress, made high up to her throat, over which were arranged three diamond necklaces in succession, and two gold chains, fastened in the centre of her bosom by a vinaigrette in the form of an envelope, with a ruby seal, intended to represent a frank, inscribed as follows:—

Triverton, November fourteen, 180—.

To the Viscountess Dowager

De Clifford,

Blichingley Park.

Herbert Grimstone.

And presented to her by that amiable young man as a commemoration of his first return to parliament! There was a humility that was quite charming about her ladyship's diamonds; for they did not disdain associating with the most homely things, as they proved, by a wreath of brilliants going across a very shabby, somewhat tumbled, and not over-clean morning cap, trimmed with the very narrowest blonde that is made, while Scotch pebbles, and dim gold bracelets, jostled very handsome diamond ones. A large pocket-handkerchief, of fine, but thick cambric, with a hem so narrow that it looked as if Mrs. Noah had employed her ingenuity on it 'pour passer le temps' in the ark; and a very

small transparent horn fan, with a wreath of roses and forget-me-nots round it, completed her 'pareur;' which having done, we will leave the illustrious lady to go down to dinner, while we go and take a survey of Mrs. Tymmons's preparations for her party.

In the first place, Mr. Tymmons had ordered *real* Champagne from "the Golden Fleece" at Triverton, and made himself extremely busy about what he called appropriate devices for everything on the supper-table; in the centre of which was a spun sugar effigy of Lord De Clifford being chaired, surmounted by two mottoes, the first of which was 'Ducit amor patriæ,' done in gold, while immediately under it, in coloured comfits, was inscribed 'Sweet's the love that *meets return!*'—this Mr. Tymmons thought witty in the extreme, and laughed for an hour at his own brilliancy; but as punning, like every other vice, increases frightfully when once indulged in, he farther proceeded to write on pieces of paper the words 'lapsus linguæ,' which he placed on every dish of tongue sandwiches; but his chef-d'œuvre consisted in putting a large empty dish in a very conspicuous part of the table, containing another placard, with 'Hobson's choice' written on it; and having concluded these elegant arrangements, by impress-

ing upon the waiters that the popping of the champagne corks should be distinctly and regularly heard every two minutes, like the Tower guns firing for the birth of an heir-apparent, he retired to his study, to take what he called "a snooze" before the company arrived.

Mrs. Hoskins being on a visit in the house, all bride though she was, thought she ought to make herself useful ; and after having manufactured a sort of galvanized white satin pyramid, to wear that evening as a head-dress, and placed the three black hollyhocks in the front of it, she very kindly offered to make lemonade with cream of tartar, and farther hinted, that soap-suds well beat up, it was impossible to tell in appearance from trifle ; and as few people eat sweet things, it saved a great deal of expense ; but this motion was negatived by Mr. Tymmons, who said it savoured too much of *close shaving* for his taste. Mrs. Tymmons herself had been in a perfect mosaic of *fusses* since seven in the morning, although her new blue satin dress (blue being the De Clifford colour) had arrived quite safely from London, and only three inches too tight across the back and shoulders. And Grimmy had been *so good*, having only spilt an ink-stand over *one* sofa, and stuck three pins into an air cushion, that had been placed at a card-table for

Mrs. Wrigglechops, the mayor's wife, to sit upon, as she was apt to be unequivocal in her demonstrations of displeasure, when every thing was not arranged according to her satisfaction.

Those abominations, white cravats, having again come into fashion, and travelled by easy stages down to Blichingley, Mr. Joseph Tymmons had spent the whole morning in essaying what he had so often tried before, to tie the happy knot; and Mr. Rush was equally occupied with experimental philosophy, by endeavouring to calculate how far he might venture to bare his throat without endangering his life.

The young ladies had remained in their bedrooms all day, with their hair in paper, and had not gone down to dinner for fear of making their noses red, as "*the officers*" were *all* coming from Triverton,—but the worst of it was, more than half of them were married men; but there was one comfort, however, which was, that Miss Isabella knew to a *certainty*, for she had heard *them say so*, that neither Captain Cub nor Major Dragglesfar admired any of the *Simmons's*. The candles were at length lit, the ringlets at length uncased, the blue satin dress at length squeezed together, Mr. Joseph's cravat at length tied, and Mr. Tymmons, just ten minutes before the arrival of the first guest, at length awake,

when he was alarmed by a loud scream underneath his study, which could proceed from no other quarter but the kitchen.

“God bless my soul !” exclaimed Mr. Tymmons, rushing down stairs, followed by Mrs. T. tucking up the blue satin, while even the young ladies ventured as far as the head of the stairs ; “bless my soul ! I hope nothing has happened to the white soup, or the mulligatawny. Mary, Hannah, Sarah, what is the matter ?”

“Alonho ! Alonho ! what on earth’s the matter ?” cried Mrs. Tymmons.

“Nothing at all, ma’am,” said Alonzo, working himself into a new livery, and shaking the powder, whose first appearance it was in that quarter, out of his hair, “it’s only Mr. Rush a trying to kiss the maids.”

“And do you call *that* nothing ! Alonho ?” said Mrs. Tymmons, turning up her eyes with horror ; “but ladies can’t interfere in *thuch* things. Mither, I hope you’ll notice such conduct *ath* it *detherves*.”

“Glad the soup’s safe, though” certainly my dear, certainly,” added Mr. Tymmons aloud. “Rush, come here, sir, follow me to my study.”

“Oh Rush,” sighed Mrs. Tymmons, as her son followed his father into the study, and she walked on to the drawing-room ; “who’d have believed you could do anything of the *thort* !”

“ Shut the door, sir,” said Mr. Tymmons, placing himself majestically in an arm-chair, “ how comes all this uproar, sir, on a night that your mother has company too ? ”

Mr. Rush looked at the carpet, and remarked what he had never done before, though he had known it for the last ten years, i. e. that it had blue in it as well as orange, and green ; but answer he made none.

“ How comes it, I say, sir ? ” reiterated his sire, but he was still silent.

“ I’ll tell you how it comes,” resumed Mr. Tymmons, senior, “ it all comes of your being such a confounded ugly dog. When *I* was your age, sir, the maids never screamed when *I* kissed them. You may go now, and kiss your sisters if you please, but never attempt to kiss any one else, as long as you live,—until you can do it without sending them into fits.”

Mr. Rush had scarcely closed the study door after him, before a loud knock was heard at the street-door, and Alonzo having been ordered not to move from behind it the whole night, before the knock had well ceased, the door was opened, and, according to the most approved fashion of all country towns, one of the waiters announced

“ *Mrs. Major Tadpole !* ” Next followed, “ *Mrs. Colonel Crumpet.* ”

Then, "the Mayor and Mrs. Wrigglechops, Miss Catfuss, and Miss Priscilla Catfuss."

"Dr. Quackemall."

Meanwhile, Mr. and Mrs. Tymmons stood like Gog and Magog, at each side of the door, to receive their guests, while the young ladies sat ranged on a neighbouring sofa, in their white muslin frocks, divided by their black-coated brothers, like the keys of a piano; and anxiously listening for the dulcet names of Cub, and Draggelfar; but, as Miss Seraphina remarked to her sister, they were too *genteel* (!) to come early. Presently, "Mr., Mrs., and the Miss Simmons's, were announced. The Miss Tymmons's rose, making a face, but greeted them with a most affectionate "how de do, dears?"

Now the eldest Miss Simmons had very fine hair, and from dressing it low, had got a village 'renommé' of being like Grisi, especially as she sang after a manner. On that evening her hair happened to be particularly well arranged: and though Captain Cub did not admire her, he had been once guilty of admiring her hair. This Miss Isabella Tymmons remembered, and under the plea of settling a hair pin that was visible, nearly pulled it all down. However, malice generally defeats itself, and poor Miss Simmons not dreaming it had been done on

purpose, good humouredly twisted it up again, even in a more becoming form than it had been before ; at the very moment too, when Major Dragglesfar, and Captain Cub, entered the room ! The latter immediately secured Miss Isabella for the first quadrille ; but she pathetically lamented that the dancing could not commence, till Lord De Clifford and his mother arrived. However they had not long to wait, for soon after the whole party from Blichingly made their appearance. The Dowager and Lord De Clifford first, with their best popularity smile, bowing, and shaking hands with every one, and Messieurs Nonplus, Fuzboz, Feedwell, and De Rivoli, bringing up the rear, the latter having been announced as

“ Mister Drivler.”

“ Law ! what a pity,” remarked *Mrs. Major Tadpole* to *Mrs. Colonel Crumpet*, “ to wear those beautiful diamonds, with that dowdy old cap, and morning dress.”

“ What beautiful diamonds ? ”

“ Why old Lady De Clifford’s.”

“ Ah, so it is ; Crumpet has long promised me a diamond sprig, and you may be sure you won’t see *me* wear it with such a dress as that.”

“ No my dear, but you’re always so *fashionable* and *dashing* in your dress : but if a *Colonel’s*

lady wasn't, I am sure I don't know who should be."

"Ah Tadpole, you're a flattering puss, but I thought there was some story about Lady De Clifford's diamonds having been stolen."

"No, it was some studs of his, and the people are in prison for it now; dear me, he's not at all handsome, is he?"

"No, but he looks *fashionable* too. I wonder what on earth Cub sees in Isabella Tymmons to flirt with; it will be a shocking bad match for him, with his connections; I'll really get Crum-pet to speak to him."

"Oh, it's *she* who flirts with him, she won't let him alone."

"I really think it will be v- v- v- *very* dishonourable, if she does not *propose* for him, after all the attention she has paid him. Mrs. Tadpole, how d- d- do you do? I am delighted to meet you again," said Mr. Frederick Feedwell, extending his hand.

"Mr. Feedwell," said the lady, turning round, "of all people in the world, I am surprised at *meeting you* here."

"And I," said Frederick, "am equally surprised at my good f- f- f- fortune in *meeting you* here."

"Oh, *we* are quartered at Triverton," re-

sponded Mrs. Tadpole ; “but how long is it since you left Brussels ?”

“Very shortly after you went,” replied Frederick ; “for, when you were gone, of course there was n-n-n- *nothing* worth staying for ;” and, so saying, he jirked up his two fingers, at the imminent risk of breaking a long willow feather that drooped from Mrs. Wrigglechop’s black velvet hat, who gave him a look sufficiently sharp to quarter him for a *salmi*. Here a sort of court-circle of the natives began to form, round which, Lord De Clifford and his mother went bowing, curtseying, smiling, hand-shaking, and making tender inquiries after the healths of people whom they did not care were dead and buried, provided their votes survived them. With regard to the moral and physical progress of the juvenile portion of the community, Lord De Clifford was peculiarly solicitous ;—and, Master Grimstone Tymmons, having indefatigably followed him, till he had nearly torn one skirt of his coat off, he turned round to his father, with a benign smile, and said,

“Tymmons, I’m afraid that dear boy grows thin, he ought not to keep such late hours.”

“Very *natrel* you should wish to see every thing *plumper* just now, my lord,” replied Mr. Tymmons, winking his right eye, and laughing

immoderately at this villainous pun, in which mirth Lord De Clifford was obliged to join, with a “ha ! ha ! ha ! very good indeed ; I see you’re as witty as ever.”

“Feedwell,” whispered Lord De Clifford, touching Frederick’s arm, “you must go and talk to the Miss Tymmons’s, ask them to dance ; and remember, they *hate* the Simmons’s, but, ‘au sage un demi mot.’”

“Who the d- d- deuce are the Simmons’s, my dear fellow?—do all the people’s names rhyme in this part of the world, eh?—I’ll tell you something by and bye about that Mrs. Tadpole, I knew her at Brussels,—that woman I was talking to just now.”

“Well, never mind telling me about any women to-night,” said De Clifford, peevishly.

“*Womens* you should say, my dear fellow,” replied Frederick, “to rhyme with Simmons, and Tymmons, you know—but where are these Simmons’s that I am to abuse to the Tymmons’s.

“There, those tall gawky girls in pink, they are Dinelyites, or, as they call them here, *pink*s.”

And, so saying, Lord De Clifford took Mr. Frederick Feedwell up to Miss Tymmons, and said, he was most anxious to have the honour of being presented to her. Miss Tymmons hated Miss Simmons so much, that she always began by admiring her—

“Don’t you think Miss Simmons very handsome?” inquired Seraphina, of Frederick.

“Handsome ! the very reverse, I should say, but then, to be sure, *I* only admire blondes,” replied he, looking languidly at Miss Tymmons’s pompadour hair.

“She is reckoned *so* like Grisi,” persisted that young lady.”

“She has a *greasy look*,” certainly, retorted Frederick, “but she has by no means a look of *Grisi*.”

“You are a sad quiz, I’m afraid, Mr. Feedwell,” murmured Seraphina.

“Happy are those whom it is im- p- p- p-possible to quiz,” sighed Frederick, looking marriage-settlements at her.

Miss Seraphina looked down, but to her poetical imagination, the chalk laurels, and reform flags on the floor, were converted into triangular pieces of bride-cake, and enamelled cards, bearing the names of “Mr. and Mrs. Frederick Feedwell,” tied together with a silver cord.

“Will you do me the honour of dancing the next quadrille?” said Frederick.

“Are your family aware of it?” murmured Seraphina, still in the United Service Club of her own thoughts.

"They are aware that I never dance, but t- t- t- temptation, you know, Miss Simmons!"

"Not quite so unfortunate as to be Miss *Simmons*, either, Mr. Feedwell," retorted the young lady, indignantly.

"Really, when I look at *you*, I forget everything," sighed Frederick, twitching his wig a little more over his right eye; "but, for the very short time you are likely to be Miss *Tymmons* either, it does not matter about one's being correct to a T."

No wife of a week's standing could look more fondly-forgiving at her husband after some slight and first offence, than did Miss Seraphina Tymmons at Mr. Frederick Feedwell, as he led her to her place in the quadrille. Major Nonplus having duly disturbed every one and everything at the card-tables, and upset two salvers of ices, now sauntered through the room in quest of farther adventures, and perceiving Mrs. Hoskins sitting close to the musicians, where, from her brown merino dress, and brown fur tippet, she might, but for the white satin pyramid, herself have passed for a *violoncello*, he walked up and accosted her with,—

"Mrs. Hoskins, your most obedient, how is my friend Hoskins? lucky fellow,—passed the honeymoon at Birmingham, didn't you? how did you like it, eh?"

“Oh, horrid place, horrid place, we had lodgings over a fur-shop, and I was distracted with the noise of thumping and hammering all night; and, when I inquired the reason of it, the woman of the house told me, that they were pounding cat-skins into foreign furs.”

“Ah, I perceive,” said Major Nonplus, taking up the corner of Mrs. Hoskins’s tippet, “this *is* a foreign fur.”

“What a useless expense these election balls are,” said Mrs. Hoskins, “except when they are given *by* the members to the electors, and then they’re all very well. So Mr. Herbert Grimstone did not stand after all; very odd his borrowing money for that purpose—*that purpose*, you know, and *not* doing so.”

“No, he’s got an appointment in Russia; some people slip through the world as if they were oiled, and my friend Herbert is certainly one of them.”

Here the dowager came up, and making the bride a curtsy, thirty degrees below zero, hoped she was well, and assured her she felt for her being married to such a man, adding, “I trust, my dear madam, you have not given the staff out of your own hand.”

“Oh! no, I’ve taken very good care to tie up my money in my own power; nothing like

taking care of the main chance, you know—the *main chance*.”

“ Very just observation ; and such prudence, I’m sure, does great credit to your head and *hort*. I often envy you the way in which your property is vested, for it is impossible to conceive the trouble we *landed proprietors* have : all *these here* Poor Laws, and Corn Laws, and tithes, are *vaustly* annoying ; and when the *landed proprietor* is a female, they are sure to be imposed upon, especially when they are of a liberal, generous *sperit*, like myself. I’m sick of seeing the puffs in the paper about the beef, coals, and blankets, Lord Sudbury gives to the poor, when, as Grindall says, they are nothing to the rabbits and water-gruel that I give ; and when there’s company in the house, I make it a *pint*, instead of paying the women who weed the gravel walks in the shrubberies, to let them come and eat up the scraps, which they have comfortably sent to them in the tool-house.”

“ I’ll tell you what makes an excellent soup for the poor,” said Mrs. Hoskins, “ though your ladyship does everything on such a liberal scale, I dare say you are already aware of it : potatoe skins, *well* boiled, with *plenty of water*, and a *little* oatmeal ; and if you wish to make it *very* rich, put, while boiling, a couple of ends of

mould candles into it. Oh ! it's an *excellent* soup—for the *poor*, you know, for the *poor*."

"Did you ever try it on any one?" asked Major Nonplus.

"Oh dear yes, a servant I had once, I fed her on nothing else for a month; but she was a poor sickly creature, and got ill, so I was obliged to send her away; those sort of people never know when they're well off—I dare say she's starving now."

"I should think," said the Major, seizing a handful of rout-cakes as they passed, "that *that* was a trade which, if learnt at all, would be learnt in a month, so perhaps she's doing very well."

Just at this moment Monsieur De Rivoli touched Major Nonplus's elbow, and, taking him to a little distance, said, looking at and round Mrs. Hoskins.

"'Ah ! quel drolle de chose,' my dear fellow; can it be 'par hazard le costume ancienne d'Angleterre?'"

"Hush ! she is a bride."

"A bride?"

"Yes."

"Oh ciel ! where is de man dat have de 'mauvais gout' to make dat?"

Here the music began playing "The Ca-

chucha," and the people reeling (for it could no be called waltzing) round; the men vehemently see-sawing their partner's arm up and down, as insurance men do the handle of a pump, on the night of a fire. One young gentleman in particular, whose head wine as well as waltzing had made giddy, fell with his partner, in a horizontal position, at Major Nonplus's and Monsieur De Rivoli's feet, and nearly pushed them into Mrs. Hoskins's lap, who was sitting alone, old Lady De Clifford having left her, to do the popular to some one else.

"Pretty tune this, pretty tune," said Mrs. Hoskins, by way of reassuring the gentlemen after their 'contretemps.' "What is it? What's the name of it?"

"'The Cachucha,'" replied the major.

"The cat what?" interrogated Mrs. Hoskins.

"'Cachucha:' it's a Spanish word."

"Oh, then, I'm sure I never shall be able to pronounce it."

"Ha! ha! ha! I know you always find it difficult to bring out the *Spanish*; however, I dare say my friend Hoskins will make you do it yet," said the major; "but there's nothing like a technical memory. Now I'll put you in the way of remembering the word cachucha: if

you were to desire an English cat to eat a French cat, what would you say?"

"Oh dear! shocking! I'm sure I don't know, for I never should think of doing such a thing."

"Well, but suppose you were, what would you say, eh?"

"Oh, but I can't suppose it."

"Well, you give it up, do you? Then I'll tell you:—you'd say to the English cat, '*cat-chew-cha*,' you know, cachucha. Ha! ha! ha!"

There is no knowing how much longer Major Nonplus might have laughed at his own inanity, had not the attention of the whole room been called to a violent squabble at the card-table, between Mrs. Wrigglechops and Miss Drucilla Catfuss, or rather an attack upon poor Miss Drucilla on the part of Mrs. Wrigglechops. The former had laid down her cards, and, with all the mildness and amiability that belongs to that epoch of female existence, had announced herself '*vingt-un*.'

"You're no such thing, ma'am, and every body sees and knows that you're not," vociferated Mrs. Wrigglechops, thumping the table with her clenched hands.

"You know, Mrs. Wrigglechops," pianoed

Miss Drucilla, even more meekly and mildly than before, "the ace is either one or eleven."

"The ace is either *won* or *lost*, ma'am; so no shuffling, ma'am, if you please, for it won't do here," whizzed Mrs. Wrigglechops; and suddenly turning to her husband, a poor little wizened man, who sat trembling beside her, and looked like a frost-bitten Ripston pippin, in a bay wig, that had evidently acquired the habit of standing on end at Mrs. Wrigglechops, and appeared to have serious thoughts of retreating altogether from the head of the wearer, "Wrigglechops," cried she, seizing and shaking his arm, "why, are you dumb? *Can* you sit by and see *your* wife so insulted? *you*, the head of the corporation, too, why don't you speak?"

But Wrigglechops never being allowed to speak at home, found it difficult to do so abroad, and, after three ineffectual hems, he was still silent.

"Pay the money, then, sir—pay the money, since you *like* to be cheated and *won't* dispute it."

"Ahem, ahem, my dear," whispered the grey *mayor*, who in that family certainly was not the better horse, "I have no money: I asked you twice for some, you know, before we came out, but you wouldn't, I mean you forgot, to give

me any, and I have only the sixpence change out of the darning needles I bought you this morning."

Luckily for Mr. Wrigglechops' safe steerage through the *needles*, where he was well-nigh splitting on the rock of his *bigger-half's* displeasure, hearing the fracas, Mrs. Tymmons had sent Lord De Clifford to request Mrs. Wrigglechops would favour them with a little music. Now, Mrs. Wrigglechops was not a little vain of her science in music, and thought she excelled as much in harmony, as every one else acknowledged she did in discord. So taking Lord De Clifford's arm, she strode away to the piano, where she belaboured that beautiful thing of Herz's, "*La Violette*," as though every note had been a husband, and every finger a cane. But, as

"Music has power to soothe the savage breast,"

Where was Fuzboz all this time? Why, "man delighted him not, nor woman either," so he thought law might, and therefore retired into Mr. Tymmons's study, snuffed the candles, stirred the fire, seated himself in *the* arm chair, and taking down the first volume of "*Burgh's Political Disquisitions*," read till he came to the 47th page, and pondered over the following passage :—

“Here we see 56 members (about a ninth part of the whole for England) are sent into the House of Commons by 364 votes, which number ought not to send in one member; for no member ought to be elected by fewer than the majority of 800, upon the most moderate calculation, in order to give 410,000 voters their due, and equally distributed share of legislative power; without which equal distribution, the majority of the men of property are enslaved to the handful of beggars, who, by electing the majority of the House of Commons, have so great an overbalance of power over them, as to be able to carry every point in direct opposition to their opinion and to their interest.”

“D—d nonsense,” muttered Fuzboz, and then he thought of his last political article in the “Investigator,” and, naturally enough, fell fast asleep. Now it so happened, that Master Grimstone Tymmons was like the devil, inasmuch as he was never idle, add to which he inherited all his father’s wit; but at his tender age it was apt to display itself more in practical jokes than in ‘bon mots.’ All the morning he had evinced his party spirit, by dabbing his nursery-maid’s cherry cheeks with a blue bag, telling her that pink was Lord Albert Dinely’s colour, and she must not wear it; a white cat

and a macaw he had also *bagged*, and was much charmed at his sport.

As the night advanced, he grew cross and sleepy, but would *not* go to bed; and finding there was not sufficient scope for his genius in the crowd of the dancing-room, he suddenly recollected that it was a long time since he had broken the glasses of his father's spectacles, and that he might as well go and do it then, while he thought of it. But we are all the creatures of circumstance, and the firmest resolves often melt, like ice beneath the sun, under its unforeseen influence. So it was with Master Tymmons; for upon opening the door of his father's *sanctum*, a spectacle awaited him that quite drove the spectacles out of his head. There sat Fuzboz, his limbs, as usual, cased in Russia ducks (which, as the Irish-woman said in the gallery of the Dublin Theatre, would have been *all the better for a swim*) his feet stretched out, while on them perched the white cat that Master Grimstone had blued that morning; his head rested on the back of the chair, and his mouth opened wide emitting most somnolent music. There was a grotesque ugliness in Fuzboz's face that tickled Master Tymmon's fancy exceedingly, and inspired him with the idea that a little blue would be a great

relief to so much black. And as with all geniuses to plan and to achieve are one, he noiselessly glided out of the room, ran up stairs to his nursery, seized the elective franchise blue bag, plunged it into water, and redescended to the study, where he held it to the fire for a few minutes, lest the shock of the cold water should awaken his victim. These preliminaries over, he proceeded cautiously on tip-toe to convert the small segment of a nose which Fuzboz possessed into a very excellent representation of a blighted Orleans plum; and that his cheeks and eyebrows might not feel themselves neglected, he bestowed equal attention upon them. At this stage of the business, Fuzboz winced a little, being tickled with the flannel of the bag, and Master Grimstone retreated for a minute behind his chair, till Somnus had again established his reign, when the youthful Apelles,—thinking that blue studs well dropped, and a flowing pattern over the Russia ducks, would considerably improve the whole,—again stepped forward, and, having achieved his glorious task, stood clapping his hands pantomimically before it, till being unable any longer to suppress his laughter, he left the room. Alas! Fuzboz is not the only one in the world who sleeps soundly, not dreaming how blue they shall look when they awake;

and, accordingly, on he slept till the supper went in and the fire went out, and from these combined causes he awoke: for the din that came from the supper-room was tremendous, and the cold of the study was intense.

“D—n it,” said Fuzboz, rubbing his eyes, which operation shaded off the blue on his cheeks rather unbecomingly; “I’ve been asleep I suppose: by all this clatter of knives and forks, they are eating in the next room. I’ll go and get something to eat too.” And so saying, with another yawn, he rose and walked into the supper room. As Fuzboz entered, Mr. Tymmons with a champagne glass in his hand, which he occasionally pirouetted in the air, was in the midst of a *neat and appropriate speech*, in which he was about to give Lord De Clifford’s health; and at that very moment concluded with these words; “And now ladies and gentlemen, unaccustomed as I am to public speaking, I shall not trespass farther on your time, than to propose the health of one, whom even had he never had a seat in Parliament, I am sure would still have had one in every heart present. I mean our worthy member, for our member he *was*, and our member he *will* be again, before this time to-morrow, Viscount De Clifford.” Tremendous applause, in which six wine glasses

were broken, and Mrs. Tymmons looked as if she thought she should be so too. “And remember, ladies and gentlemen, added he, that the most effectual method we can adopt, to make our opponents look *black*, is by every one of us to a man, looking *blue*.” Hear! hear! hear! and great applause, in which Fuzboz joined, as he advanced towards the table, where he had no sooner taken his place, than every one became convulsed with laughter, except Lord De Clifford, who did not understand, Fuzboz, his jackall, his whipper-in, his boots! his retail Rugantino, “playing such pranks before high heaven,” at such a time! Could he mean to throw ridicule on *his* august person? and if not, who in their turn could have presumed to take such liberties with so great a man, as his literary and political scavenger? It was most surprising! most mysterious!—and the mystery might have remained unsolved till doom’s-day, had not Master Grimstone, proud of the excessive satisfaction his handy-work had occasioned, boldly stepped forward, and proclaimed himself the author of it; whereupon, he was ordered to bed, and carried thither, ‘*vi et armis*.’ Mrs. Wrigglechops thanked God *she* had never had a child. Mrs. Hoskins hoped she never might have one. And Fuzboz de-

clared the young rascal would live to be a Tory !

Delightful as *all* parties are, and as this one was in particular, the time must come, when people must go, and that time had now arrived. Alonzo was still standing behind the door, where his powder had been blowing about the whole night, during the ball ; and chaotic was the confusion of cloaks, shawls, caleches, and clogs ; while so dense and yellow was the fog, that all the flies looked like flies in amber, as Mrs. Wrigglechops stepped into hers, and drove off, telling her husband to be sure and put *Mrs. Major* adpole safe into her chair.

CHAPTER XI.

“ The people of England experience no more aid from their supposed representatives, than if the House of Commons was in form, and avowal, what it is in truth and substance, a chamber for registering ministerial edicts.”

The parson he preaches, the doctor he leaches,
And water extinguishes fire!
But elections! they teach us, that dinners and speeches,
Are *all* that the people require.
For as for the Poor Laws, we know they are sure laws,
Making famine as fertile as sloes,
With such excellent Boor Laws, who'd try to cure laws,
Not the Whigs, sir, as all the world knows.

At twelve o'clock on the morning after Mrs. Tymmons's party, the returning officer had declared Lord De Clifford duly elected, and by a quarter past one, he had addressed the free and independant electors of Triverton, from the balcony of the Golden Fleece, in a blue waistcoat, and a liberal speech, after which, he was chaired up, and down, and round, the town, in a very handsome chair, with a pepper caster top, wreathed with blue ribbons, and yellow crysanthemums, while before it walked many hundreds of the hatless and coatless patriots, intoxicated

with the spirit—of liberty, and bearing flags with the following inscriptions,—

“Vote by Ballot.”

“Civil and Religious Liberty.”

“De Clifford the man of the people.”

“No Corn Laws.”

While immediately over the chair waved a banner, containing an inscription of the popular member's own concocting, which ran as follows :

“The strength of a people is vested in themselves;

“Their liberty can only be obtained by themselves;

“And their rights can be protected by *none but themselves*.

These truths, coming as they did from a beautiful blue satin flag, of course elicited loud cheers, with cries of “De Clifford for ever !” But it was not till they passed Hobson's hustings, and the band struck up “See the conquering hero comes,” as a delicate attention to the defeated candidate, that Mr. Frederick Feedwell (who formed the fourth in a britschka with Monsieur De Rivoli, Major Nonplus, and Fuzboz) thought sufficient allusion had been made to himself individually, to call for any manifestations on his part ; but he no sooner heard this inspiring air, than he took off his hat, and

bowed most graciously to the right and to the left. The Dowager Lady De Clifford followed in a close carriage; the four black horses had blue rosettes, and Frump had taken care to exchange the green veil that usually adorned her ladyship's lavender silk bonnet, for one of sky blue crape, which had a charming effect against the faded lilac of the figured silk.

The chairing was over at four; and, as the dinner was to take place at five, Lord De Clifford and his friends had arranged to dress at the Golden Fleece. Frederick had taken the precaution of eating no breakfast; for how could he have managed a five-o'clock dinner, if he had? and as he never travelled two miles from home without Horsdœuvre, he had desired him to superintend the dressing of all the things for Lord De Clifford's end of the table, and afterwards to dress himself, and stand behind his, Mr. Frederick Feedwell's chair, to watch that he did not incontinently venture upon any experiments of native talent. Monsieur De Rivoli having ascertained that the large screen he saw at one end of the dining-room was placed there for the accommodation of the wives and daughters of Lord De Clifford's constituents, that they might be edified by hearing the speeches that swayed their husbands and brothers' politics,

resolved upon a *recherché toilette* on speculation. And Major Nonplus having with great assiduity ferretted out that Mr. Lamb, mine host of the Golden Fleece, had actually in his cellar six bottles of Cote-d'or, made interest to get them placed in a basket under the table, where he was to sit, fully intending in the course of the evening to relieve guard in that quarter himself.

Fuzboz had his preparations to make too; but they were of a different nature, his Russia ducks being like the laws of the Medes and Persians, inasmuch as they "altered not," for dinner, breakfast, or supper; and as it still wanted three quarters of an hour to the dinner, he sat down and wrote a full account of nearly all that *was to take place* at it for "the Investigator;" he also put a speech into Mr. Wrigglechops' mouth, which the poor man never would, and, what was "more germane to the matter," never *could* make, in which he made him insidiously confound the late with the present Lord Cheveley's politics, and upon that ground denounce the latter as an apostate, anathematising him with a couplet from Lucan's *Pharsalia* :—

"Audax venali comitatur curio linguâ
Vox quandam populi libertatemque tueri
Ausus."

Poor Mr. Wrigglechops ! he would as soon have thought of swallowing laurel leaves as quoting Latin, seeing he did not know a syllable of it ; for having been for many years churchwarden before he was mayor, he was opinion that the dead should be left to rest in peace ; and as for making a speech at all, he would rather have submitted to a beating from his wife any day, than have attempted such a thing ; for he was used to the one, and therefore got over it very well, but Heaven only knows how he would have got through the other ; so that, all sceptic as he was, Fuzboz must have acknowledged in his heart that his making the dumb speak was nothing less than a miracle !

Five o'clock at length arrived, and with it the guests. Luke-warm dishes, with tin covers, were placed on the table ; and those most patriotic of all sounds, the drawing of corks, and clatter of knives and forks, were heard.

“ You don't know me, sir, do you ? ” asked a man in a bottle-green coat, gilt buttons, and a long capsicum-coloured scorbutic face, who was shovelling knife-loads of cod into his mouth, as he sat on one side of Mr. Frederick Feedwell :

Frederick had a mind to be facetious, and therefore replied,

“ Yes, you are a *fishmonger*.”

“ Well, now, so I am ; I shouldn’t have thought as you’d have remembered me ; I’m Sounds, the fishmonger, in Hungerford Market. Don’t you remember a tiff you and I had once about the price of a turbot, the time as you fought that pop-gun duel with Muster Jackson ? Well, that very day, not knowing whether you’d live to eat it, that French chap as you had for a cook—why, catch me, if that aint he a stan’ing behind your chair now !—well, he comed down to the market and *h*ordered a turbot, and you said the lobster sauce of it warn’t good, and refused to pay more nor thirty shillings for it ; so I was obleged to take the law on you. But at a time like this, sir, when the freedom of *h*our country, *h*and the liberties of *H*englishmen, *his*, I trust, secured by the *glorus* result of this day’s ’lection, I should not call myself a man, if I wasn’t willing to drown *h*all *h*animosities in the sea of reconciliation ! So I shall be *w*ery ’appy to take *v*ine with you, sir, *h*and drink to forget and forgive !—that’s my way of doing business !”

So saying, Mr. Sounds poured out a glass of Cape Madeira, that had assumed the travelling title of sherry, and having given notice of its descent by a loud smack of the lips, again turned to Frederick, and patronizingly inquired whether he should help him to cod ?

“ Thank you ; I ne-ne-ne-never eat cod,” said he ; “ I only take the oyster sauce ;” a fact that he clearly demonstrated, by conveying the whole contents of a tureen that Horsdœuvre had just brought him, into his plate, to the great dismay of Mr. Wrigglechops, who sat within two of him, with his fish cooling before him, in anxious expectation of its “ old familiar friends,” the oysters.

“ Come, come, fair play’s a jewel, as the fox said to the goose,” cried Mr. Sounds, eyeing the diorama of the ‘rocherde cancale’ on Frederick’s plate. “ *Munoply* his the distruction of trade ; *hif* *hevery* one *vas* to turn themselves *hinto* *hoyster*-beds, as you do, what would become of the cods ? Vy, the sea *would* be *hover* pop’lated ; and that would be a pretty business, beyond the power of the government to reg’late.”

“ Let us hope, Mr.—what name may I admire your sound sense by ?” parenthesised Frederick.

“ You’ve hit it, sir—Sound. My name is Sounds, sir, *has* I told *ee* before. Jacob Sounds, of No. — Hungerford Market, London ; and 45, Westgate Street, Triverton.”

“ I was going to observe, Mr. Cod Sounds,”

—— “ Jacob, sir, if you please.”

“ —Je-Je-Je Jacob Sounds, that no doubt were the marine over-population that you dread

to insue, there would be some ultra-marine Malthus and Martineau found among the whales, that would set it all to rights ; but with such a member as your's," added Mr. Frederick Feedwell, who never could resist a sneer at his best friends, " earth, air, and water, will all be well regulated."

" Why certainly he's a thorough-going Reformer, as thinks nothink of his *hown* *hinterests* compared to the people's—for he told us so in his speech to-day."

" And what stronger proof of his integrity can you require?" smiled Frederick. " I'd advise you to make the most of him, for you never can hope to get another like him !"

" I don't say that neither," depreciated Mr. Sounds ; " for it's my maxim that there's as good fish in the sea as *never* was caught ; and reform is a good strong net, as catches *hall* sorts of *hodd* fish. So ve'll *ope* for the best."

" *Y a-t-il du gibier ?*" whispered Frederick to Horsdœuvre.

" *Oui, de potence, je crois, monsieur,*" replied that distinguished *artiste* ; " for one man at de oder table, when I go just now to ask for some of de *bœuf Anglois* dat have been hanged, for Monsieur le Major Nonplus, he say to me if I was Jaques Ketch ; *mais ils sont tous des*

politiques polissons ici je croi; moi j'aime les politiques au riz; comment appelez-vous cela, au riz, Tory?—ah, oui, Tory, c'est ça."

"*Tait toi,*" said Frederick; "and take these *heignets* to Mr. Fuzboz, that gentleman opposite."

"*Ah oui, le Monsieur avec le nez bémolisé.*"

"Mr. Mayor," said Mr. Chubb, the cheesemonger, protruding his chin across the table, "the pleasure of a glass of wine with you?"

"With pleasure, Mr. Chubb."

"Your good health, sir."

"The same to you, sir."

"I think I saw your *lady*, Mr. Wrigglechops, on the hustings this morning. Mrs. Chubb and my girls *was* just five minutes too late to get a good place; however, they'll hear the speeches to-night."

Mrs. Wrigglechops was also to hear the speeches that night; and it was just possible she might at that very moment be within ear-shot, behind the screen. So the Mayor replied, in a much louder tone than his usual *consort* pitch:

"Yes, sir, thanks to Mrs. Wrigglechops, no one is ever too late in *her* house; every thing is like clock-work there."

"Very true," chuckled Mr. Tymmons to

Mr. Snooks, the shoe-maker ; and I'm sure he and she are the clock itself, for when her hand is at *strike*, he's always *silent*. Ha ! ha ! ha !"

Here the din of voices, and clatter of knives, plates, and glasses, became tremendous, and precluded all conversation but that of a complimentary nature, which the louder it is uttered, the better.

"What a fine boy that *do* grow of yours, at the Blue Coat School," bellowed Mr. Scraggs, the butcher, to Mr. Grain, the glazier.

"*Lawr*, do you think so?" replied Mr. Grain ; "his mother and I thinks him quite a ruffian ; he eats *tremenjus* !"

"Well, I was thinking," said Scraggs, "as you had had more meat since he've been home ; but depend upon it, Grain, its a *wicious* way of bringing *hup* the rising *genration*, not to let 'em *ave* plenty of *wittles*, 'specially meat ; and that's the reason as I don't *prove* of the New Poor Laws."

"Very true," said Mr. Butts, the brewer ; "meat, and *plenty of beer*, is the best thing you can give a child, rely upon it."

"Give them plenty of *beer*," said Mr. Tymmons, "and, then I suppose you mean to say, nothing will ever *ale* them ! he ! he ! he ! he !"

One of those sudden and awful silences, that

sometimes take place in a crowd, now ensued, and betrayed Mr. Tymmons ha ! ha-ing all by himself. ‘Non nobis domini,’ was then played, the cloth was removed, the vice-president rose, and thumping three times distinctly on the table, cried out,—

“Gentlemen, charge your glasses.”

“That *wee’l be sure* to do,” whispered Mr. Lamb, the landlord, to Mr. Brown, the wine-merchant.

“The Queen,” was then drank, and the national anthem played ; next followed,

“The Duchess of Kent, and the royal family.” Then came “Lord Melford, and her Majesty’s ministers ;” three times three.

But the vice-president begged to propose an amendment, that Lord Melford’s health might again be drank by itself.

Unbounded applause.

AIR,

“’Mid pleasures and palaces.”

“And now, gentlemen,” said Mr. Gullwell, the vice-president, again rising,—who, with a white pocket-handkerchief in his right hand, accompanied his periods by occasionally shifting the wine-glasses before him, and changing the position, first of his right foot, and then of his left, much after the manner of the late lamented

Mr. Matthews, in his inimitable “ At homes ”—
“ and now, gentlemen, often as it has been my grateful pride to address you,—upon no former occasion did I ever feel such pride and such gratitude as I do on the present—(hear ! hear ! hear !) for to-night we are met to celebrate for the fourth time, the return (for the loyal and independant Borough of Triverton) of a member, who, whether we view him in the private life which he endears, or the public one which he adorns, alike must command our esteem, our admiration, and our gratitude !—(Hear ! hear ! hear ! and tremendous thumping of the table.) Gentlemen, we live in times, when, as the hero of Trafalgar proclaimed, ‘ England expects every man to do his duty ’—and when was England ever yet disappointed in such an expectation ? The men of Triverton, as the termination of this day’s contest can certify, have gloriously *done* theirs, and great is their reward, for all that the country at large demands in its representatives—and therefore, like the Grecian painter who required perfection, have to seek in *many*, they have had the singular good fortune to find in *one*—is it the stern, the incorruptible, the self-sacrificing patriotism of ancient Rome you require ?—you have it in him. Seek you the living model of that

filial virtue which Seneca has so lauded to posterity in a Manlius and a Xenophon, in him you will find it excelled—in short, whether as husband, father, brother, statesman, or friend, virtue wants an all-comprising name—she has but to pronounce that of De Clifford!”—(hear ! hear ! hear ! great table thumping, and several glasses broken)—“ Truly may he say of his splendid achievements in the cause of reform—

‘ Exegi monumentum ære perennius.’

And now, gentlemen, knowing that it will find an echo in every heart here, I will propose the health of our enlightened and patriotic member—Viscount De Clifford !”

“ Viscount De Clifford !”

“ Hip ! hip ! hip ! hurrah !”—(nine times nine.)

When the plaudits had in some measure subsided, Lord De Clifford rose, with all that bashfulness peculiar to hacknied speakers and girls of fifteen, and spoke as follows.

“ Gentlemen, in once more rising to address you, with Triverton and its inhabitants for my theme, I find I am for the first time in my life destitute of words ; and yet this should not be, for you are *one and all* in my heart, and ‘ out of the fullness of the heart the mouth speaketh’ ”—(hear ! hear ! hear !)—“ I will speak, then, but

it shall be of that which is and ever shall be most dear to me—*your* interests ; I should be unworthy of being *their* depository, were I undeserving of the eulogium my honourable friend the vice-president has this night pronounced upon me—*no*, it is the conviction *that I am deserving of it*, which makes me feel that I am worthy of *you* ;”—tremendous applause from Fuzboz, followed in a few minutes by the rest of the guests)—“need I remind you that I was among the first of your leaders who, despairing that a corrupt body like a Tory House of Commons should voluntarily reform itself, urged and obtained the interposition of the *people* ? for I knew that dispersed and abstract efforts must be unavailing ; that in such an enterprise, unity of purpose and combination of exertion could alone insure success ; for I, for one, was never deterred from appealing to the *people*, by that miserable commonplace of invective that would brand me as the diffuser of discontents, and the provoker of sedition—no, I know too well the nothingness of a jargon that does not even deserve to be dignified with so specious a name as *sophistry*, and felt for it that contempt which a man of common capacity must always feel, and which an honest man will always express.”—(hear ! hear ! hear !)—“I, and all

the friends of reform were told, that though we knew the limits of our own reforms, we could not prescribe limits to the desire of innovation their success might awaken in the minds of the people; to so threadbare a generality, it was scarcely necessary to oppose another commonplace, that no abuse could be reformed if all institutions are to be inflexibly maintained. Yet it was a provocative to do so, when the friends of reform were continually told to remember that no government could be secure if change were perpetually allowed—nay, this battered objection was issued as a fiat, and for a long time implicitly obeyed by the servile majority.—

‘ Tibi summum rerum judicium dii dedere—
Nobis obsequii gloria relicta est.’”

(Loud cheers from the *gentlemen* at the lower end of the table, who did *not* understand Latin, and consequently did not detect the plagiarism.)

“But happily that majority was succeeded by a greater and more liberal one; and many who deplored the madness of our temerity in venturing our all in the bark of Reform, as long as it was buffetting the stormy ocean of opposition, are willing enough to hail its success with their cowardly cheers, now that the gale of popular feeling, and the strong current of public

opinion, together with its having been *so ably manned*, have brought it safely into port; but I would warn you to be cautious of that support, which never would have been offered, but that it is no longer wanted. Having achieved this glorious victory, now let us study to maintain it; which can only be done by giving to the people that high and healthy tone of morals, which places them beyond oppression on the one hand, and above sedition on the other.” (Hear, hear, hear.) But a people’s morals, like their power, must emanate from themselves; it is by cultivating all the finer and holier yarn of humanity, that woofs our nature, that *that* nature must be improved. Our homes and hearths are the nurseries of our virtues or our vices. The ‘boy is father to the man’—the acorn must be planted before the oak can flourish. Are you children? So am I. Are you fathers? So am I. Are you husbands, and does your existence twine round a dearer self? So does mine.” (Audible sobs from behind the screen.) “And it is by all these nearest and dearest ties of our common nature, that I appeal to you,—that I conjure you, to weed, to prune, and to train the minds of the future men and women that are intrusted to your care. It is not so much by making punishments terrible, and vice hideous,

that I would deprive them of followers, as by making virtue lovely, and justice attainable. I would ask no greater boon, than that I might live to see every gaol in the kingdom replaced by a garden, and every gibbet exchanged for a gymnasium." (Hear, hear, hear, and an uproar of applause.) "And now, my friends and fellow-townsmen, if I have not thanked you for your kind and zealous support, which I feel the more proud of, from the conviction that it was given to the *measures*, and not the *man*, it is because I *cannot*. There has been such a run upon my gratitude, that though it is far, *very far* from a state of bankruptcy, yet it will require time, perhaps my whole life, to repay you the balance of obligation I owe you." (hear, hear, hear.) "I will not, therefore, trespass farther on your patience, than to bid you engrave upon your hearts, the inscription I had on my banner this morning, and remember that

"*The strength of a people is vested in themselves,*
"*Their liberty can only be obtained by themselves.*"

"One word more. Without detracting from my obligations to you, gentlemen, I feel that I should not have been brought in *so handsomely*, that is, on such *fair* grounds, had not your wives and daughters lent me *their* countenance. I,

therefore, must beg leave to propose the health of the ladies of Triverton, and its vicinity."

The noble lord then sat down amid uproarious acclamations, especially from Mr. Wrigglechops, and great giggling from behind the screen. The ladies' health having been drank, they took the hint ; and, not to injure it by sitting up too late, instantly departed ; but Mrs. Wrigglechops was so melted by the conjugal pathos of parts of Lord De Clifford's speech, that she sent Mr. Wrigglechops a shilling round, by one of the waiters, in case he should like to go home in a fly : and Miss Caroline Chubb was in such a fever of admiration, that she said she should die if she did not get a bit of his lordship's writing.

"For, ma, I don't think he could take it amiss, if I *was* to send round, and ask him for a frank ; after *our* Frank getting him three plumpers."

"Well, s'pose you do, Carry," assented Mrs. Chubb, "but who'll you get the frank directed to?"

"Oh dear, I never thought of that ! but, as I'm going to Margate myself on Monday, I could get it directed to me ; and I should find it in the post-office ready for me, when I get there."

"That's a very good thought, Carry, and it

will look so *genteel* besides; for gentlefolks always *has* such loads of letters, that I often think they must hire people to write to them: but you can't send a word of mouth message to his lordship, it wouldn't be *purlite*; but just write him a bit of a note,—stop, let Betsy do it, she's used to making out the bills, and writes a better hand."

Accordingly, Betsy went into a small room, where the *ladies* were putting on their clogs and cloaks, and called for a sheet of paper; when, from the force of habit, she began,—

"Viscount De Clifford debtor to T. Chubb."

"Dear me, don't be so stupid, Betsy," said Miss Caroline, "I'll tell you what to say;" and accordingly she dictated the following billet:—

"Miss C. Chubb presents her respectful compliments to the Right Hon. Viscount De Clifford, (M.P. for Triverton); and having the greatest possible wish for his lordship's *cenotaph*, should be greatly *obliged* by his *obliging* her with it in the form of a frank, directed to

'Miss Caroline Chubb, junior.'

Miss C. Chubb having a maiden aunt of that name, eighty-two years of age, sister to her father, living at Ferrybridge in Yorkshire, will thank his lordship to put the junior, to prevent mistakes.

‘ Post Office,
‘ Margate,
‘ Isle of Thanet,
‘ Kent.’

‘ To be left till called for.

“ Golden Fleece Hotel, Friday night,
September the 10th, 18—.”

“ P.S. Miss Caroline Chubb, *junior*, begs to apologise to his lordship for making the above demand, and hopes his lordship wont think of giving the frank, unles *quite* convenient.”

“ That will do uncommon well,” said Mrs. Chubb, spelling over the note, “ but what is a cenotaph, Carry ?”

“ Laur, ma ; I thought every one knew what a cenotaph was : why, a cenotaph is one’s own writing written by another person, to be sure.”

“ You must remember, Carry,” said Mrs. Chubb, “ that it isn’t every one that has had the schooling, and *genteel* education, as you’ve had. I’m sure, I thought, when his lordship was telling us to attend to our children, well ! that may be a slap at *some*, but not at *me* : but wasn’t it a *helegant* speech, ma’am ?” inquired Mrs. Chubb of Mrs. Wrigglechops, who was pinning up her gown, and tucking up a white dimity petticoat beyond the fear of mud.

“Yes, *that's* something like a husband ! did you mind how he spoke of his wife ? Tell Chubb, will you, to send me the best stilton he has, to morrow ; and two pounds of the poorest cheddar he's got, for Wrigglechops : I'm obliged to keep him low, good things don't agree with him, he's such a poor creature.”

“Thank you, ma'm, I'll be sure to attend to it ; but do you ever give the mayor (you'll excuse me, ma'am) a new laid egg, beat up in brandy ? It's an excellent thing for people who are rather weak.”

“Oh, all the beating up in the world don't do *him* any good.”

Here the waiter returned with the frank, and a note from Lord De Clifford, begging Miss Caroline Chubb, *junior*, would at all times command his services ; and assuring her, that he never should be guilty of the bad taste of mistaking her maiden aunt of eighty-two, for the blooming Miss Caroline Chubb, of eighteen ; although he might not have the good fortune to be so near either of them as *Margate was to Ferry-bridge*.

After the departure of the *ladies*, the *gentlemen*, as is their wont, became happy and unrestrained : Lord De Clifford and his guests retired at midnight, all, except Major Nonplus,

who had knocked under long before that hour ; nor was he a solitary instance, as most of the patriotic assemblage were far from being “ neat *as imported*.” No speeches of any importance had been made after the screen had become untenanted, for Lady De Clifford’s health was the only toast given, to which Lord De Clifford briefly replied, as follows :—

“ Gentlemen, in the toast you have just done me the honour of drinking, you have awakened feelings of so home and personal a nature, that it would be *egotism*, were I to say more than that *I thank you from the bottom of my heart*.”

Here Lord De Clifford pressed both his hands to his breast, and hid his face by bowing down to the table, amid the deafening plaudits of a sympathizing audience. So loud and long continued were the shouts of pure patriotism and universal philanthropy, that, as the wall of their rooms also formed that of the banquetting-room of the Golden Fleece, it was four in the morning before Mary Lee and her father could get any sleep, as they lay on their narrow beds in the jailor’s house.

CHAPTER XII.

“Publicity is the soul of justice.”—*Jeremy Bentham.*

“Injuries, we may and do forgive; but insults so debase the mind below its own level, that nothing but revenge can satisfy it.”—*Junius.*

But Time winds up his dread account at last!
Then unsway'd justice, fate's stern gauger comes,
Testing th' unlawful measures of our life,
And into the light and wanting balance throws
The dire portentous record of our doom!

Unpublished Play.

“The law's a ass.”—*Mr. Bumble.*

It was about a week after Lord De Clifford's election dinner, that the day was fixed for the trial of the Lees. Cheveley had constantly been to see them, but could glean no good tidings as to any tangible evidence in their favour, beyond Madge Brindal's vague and mysterious prophecies; of which even Mary herself was beginning to weary. Both Lee and his daughter had passed a sleepless night; and when the day of their doom dawned, even the feeling of conscious innocence, that had hitherto supported them, seemed to desert them at the idea of the terrible ordeal they had to undergo.

"If I get clear out of that accursed court," said the old man, as he placed his spectacles and the packet of Lord De Clifford's letters in the side-pocket of his coat, "I'll go to America; there are no lords there."

"It will be time enough to talk of going to America," replied Madge, who had taken great pains in dressing Mary in a new black dress, and was now busily arranging her bright golden hair down her faded but still beautiful face, "when you have seen the real culprits in this business well exposed, and properly punished."

"And what chance is there of that, Madge? Am I not a poor and an injured man?"

Here a knock came to the door. "Come in," said Lee; and Mrs. Darby entered with her apron to her eyes, to hide the tears she did not shed, as she announced that the "two *pleesemen* was below, to show Mr. Lee the way to the court-house."

"I am ready," said the old man calmly.

"And so am I," said Mary, in a still more assured voice. "Good bye, darling," added she, stooping to kiss her child, who was sitting on the floor, placing a row of wooden cups and saucers round Wasp, who was patiently sitting within the magic circle, pricking up his ears, and turning his head alternately to and from

Madge, his master, and Mary, as they each spoke or moved.

“*Me’ll do with oo,*” cried the child, starting up, and letting all his playthings fall, as he held out his little arms to his mother.

“No,” said Mary, seizing him in her arms, and bursting into tears, “they may drag me to a court of justice, if they like, and I may drag my poor father there, but they never shall drag *you* there if your mother can help it !”

“Mary ! Mary ! is this your firmness ?” said the old man. “I thought you were to be an example to me, and that I was not to see a tear, all woman as you are.”

“You shall not see another,” said Mary, gently putting down the child, and telling him that he must remain with Madge. “Now I am ready to go.”

It was a fine fresh autumnal morning, with a bright sun. The judges and barristers had all breakfasted. Mr. Serjeant Puzzlecase had been retained for the plaintiff ; who had also had his solicitor, Mr. Helper, down from London. The case was to be tried before Judge Dinely, a brother of Lord Shuffleton’s ; to whom Lord De Clifford had kindly intimated, that he hoped he would make the sentence on those poor people as lenient as possible, on account of the

poor girl, whom he understood was deranged. Mr. Sergeant Puzzlecase had made himself so agreeable at breakfast, with anecdotes of the witnesses he had badgered, and the juries he had bamboozled; the innocent people he had inculpated, and the guilty ones he had exculpated; that every one felt sorry when business obliged them to separate.

The court was crowded to excess. Cheveley had mingled with the crowd; and the first persons Mary and her father saw were John Stokes and his wife; the latter sobbing so violently that she was ordered out of court, which had a wonderful effect in subduing her agitation. The din within was now drowned by the clamour from without. It was the cheers of the people, as Lord De Clifford alighted from his carriage. Shortly after his arrival, the prisoners were placed at the bar. The old man held his daughter's hand. She trembled violently, and never raised her eyes; but he looked calmly, almost triumphantly round. A murmur of compassion ran through the court.

Mr. Sergeant Puzzlecase rose; and gracefully lifting up his gown, by placing his left hand behind his back, while his right, *pro tempore*, rested in his bosom, opened the case for the plaintiff in an eloquent speech, wherein he

implored the jury to remember, that although his client had, with his usual benevolent magnanimity, wished (had it been in his power) on the present occasion to have prevented the law taking its course; and, not being able to do so, was anxious that it should be mitigated as much as possible,—“ Yet, my lord, and gentlemen of the jury,” continued he, raising the clenched hand of his right arm above his head, and curtsying nearly to the ground, as he let it fall again with an electric thump upon the desk, “ *this* is an additional reason why *you* should be doubly guarded how you let aggressing vice triumph, through the forbearing clemency of injured virtue ! You are not perhaps aware, and therefore it becomes my duty to inform you, that the heinous offence of which the prisoner, or prisoners, at the bar stand charged, was, according to our ancient Saxon law, nominally punished with death, if the thing stolen was above the value of twelve pence; but the criminal was allowed to redeem his life by a pecuniary ransom: but in the ninth of Henry the First this power of redemption was taken away, and all persons guilty of larceny, above the value of twelve pence, were directed to be hanged; which law continued in force for a long time; and though, according to

the stat. fourth of George the First, the inferior species of theft or petit larceny is only punished by imprisonment, or whipping, in common law, yet it may be punished by transportation for seven years. It has also been held, that if two persons steal goods to the amount of thirteen pence, it is *grand larceny* in both; and if one, at different times, steals divers parcels of goods from the same person, which together exceed the value of twelve pence, they *may* be put together in one indictment, and the offender found guilty of grand larceny. But this is very seldom done; the clemency of juries will often make them bring in larceny to be under twelve pence, when it is really of much greater value. But this, though evidently justifiable and proper, when it only reduces the present nominal value of money to the ancient standard, is otherwise a kind of pious perjury; and it is now settled that the value of the property stolen must not only be in the whole of such an amount as the law requires, to constitute a capital offence, but the stealing must be to that amount at one and the same particular time."

The learned gentleman having now sufficiently appealed to the understandings of the jury, by completely puzzling them out of their wits, next began to appeal to their feelings.

“Here then, gentlemen, is the offence not only clearly established, since the value of the property stolen is between two and three hundred pounds. But what will you say, when I tell you that the crime was aggravated by the basest, the blackest, the most unaccountable ingratitude? I would fain spare you so revolting a detail; but justice commands, and I must obey. What will you think, I say, gentlemen of the jury, when I tell you that the plaintiff was the prisoners’ patron, benefactor, I may say *friend*; for, superior to the accidental distinctions of birth, *he* is the friend of all mankind. It is only one little year since my noble client, hearing that the defendant’s daughter was about to be married, united with his amiable and exemplary mother in bestowing on her a more than adequate dower. This will appear the more magnanimous, when I inform you that the unfortunate young woman had been for some time labouring under an aberration of intellect, owing to desertion of an unprincipled seducer in her own walk of life; and that her insanity took the turn of imaging the plaintiff to be her betrayer—a supposition carrying absurdity on the face of it, from the fact of the plaintiff’s never having resided at Blichingly, till a very short time previous to his going abroad, three

years ago. Nevertheless the elder prisoner, without the excuse of his daughter's madness, affects to believe her statement, and repays the most generous patronage and protection, by heaping insults of every description upon my noble client and his illustrious mother."

Here Lord De Clifford, observing the look of fixed contempt and defiance on Lee's face, and that his counsel was taking notes, became very fidgetty, and tried to catch Mr. Sergeant Puzzlecase's eye, to make him understand that he need not dwell any longer on *that* part of the subject.

"But, my lord, and gentlemen of the jury," resumed the learned gentleman, "the plaintiff's mercy was indeed of 'an unstrained quality,' for his object was still to return good for evil; and it was only the very day after his last arrival in the county, that he ordered the prisoner to be sent for to Blichingly Park, the residence of his illustrious mother, in order that he might be impartially employed, with other tradesmen. And what was the result? I blush with indignation while I relate it! The grossest insolence, on the part of the prisoner, to the dowager Lady De Clifford's steward; and the abstraction of two valuable diamond studs, the property of her son, value, as the account fur-

nished by Messieurs Storr and Mortimer can testify, three hundred and sixty guineas, besides a gold watch of her ladyship's. To the last the prisoner was hardened and daring in the extreme; for would you believe it, my lord, and gentlemen of the jury, that when the ministers of justice entered his house to search it, he affected to deliver all his keys into their custody with the greatest alacrity. But mark the sequel! the stolen goods were found in the secret drawer of the prisoner's own private desk! and, on being restored to their lawful possessor, a large brilliant was missing from the centre of one of the studs. To what purpose the absent jewel was converted you will be at no loss to decide, when I tell you, gentlemen of the jury, that during the prisoner's and his daughter's stay in the county gaol, instead of the bare cell, befitting their crime and their fortunes, they were the tenants of luxurious apartments, and the consumers of delicate viands, in the gaoler's house. And was it to the compassion, the humanity, the disinterested benevolence of Mr. Davie Darby, the turnkey, or to the milk of human kindness flowing in the bosom of the amiable Mrs. Darby, that the carpenter and his daughter were indebted for these refinements in their *seclusion*? No, gentlemen of the jury,

it was to the four guineas a week which they paid, and which I can prove that they paid; to Mr. Davie Darby, that they owed it all. Let me then conjure you to be cautious how you allow yourselves to be biassed by the *apparent* respectability of age, or the *should be* innocence of youth. Just as men in general should be just before they are generous; so should a British jury be just before they are merciful."

And with this sublime maxim, and beautiful peroration, down sat Mr. Sergeant Puzzlecase, and up rose Mr. Sergeant Carrington for the defendant. But as he had only plain truth on his side, his speech is not worth recording.

The first witness examined was George Newman, hostler at the De Clifford Arms, by Mr. Sergeant Puzzlecase.

"What took you to Blinchingly Park on Tuesday the 24th of June last, at or about two o'clock in the afternoon?"

Witness—"My feet." (Laughter.)

"Silence in the court."

"No insolence, Sir, if you please," resumed Mr. Sergeant Puzzlecase. "What business took you there?"

Witness, scratching his head—"Whoy, meas-ter's business."

Mister Sergeant Puzzlecase—"I did not ask

you *whose* business, but what business—on what account did you go there?”

Witness—“On count of the bloind mare.”

Mr. Sergeant Puzzlecase—“Who did you go to see?”

Witness—“To see to get the bloind mare out to grass.”

Mr. Sergeant Puzzlecase—“Who did you speak to?”

“Witness—“Master Grindall.”

Mr. Sergeant Puzzlecase—“What did he say?”

Witness—“As I was a fool.” (Laughter.)

Mr. Sergeant Puzzlecase—“Why did he say you were a fool?”

Witness—“Cause I talked of the old lady’s having compassion on the poor, and turning out measter’s cattle for less than the gentlefolks.”

Mr. Sergeant Puzzlecase—“Did you see the prisoner at the bar on that day?”

Witness—“No, cause I never seed the bar at all afore to-day.” (Laughter.)

Mr. Sergeant Puzzlecase—“Did you see John Lee, the carpenter?”

Witness—“Yeze.”

Mr. Sergeant Puzzlecase—“Where was he?”

Witness—“In Master Grindall’s room.”

Mr. Sergeant Puzzlecase—“What was he doing?”

Witness—"Nothing."

Cross-examined by Mr. Sergeant Bungle.

"What was he saying?"

Witness—"The truth."

Mr. Sergeant Bungle—"What about?"

Witness—"About Muster Grindall and his mistress."

Mr. Sergeant Bungle—"What did he say of them?"

Witness—"That they was a couple of reglar old rascals." (Laughter.)

Mr. Sergeant Bungle—"When John Lee left Mr. Grindall's room, where did he go to?"

Witness—"Home."

Mr. Sergeant Bungle—"How do you know?"

Witness—"Cause I went with him."

Mr. Sergeant Bungle—"Now, recollect yourself; you are quite certain that Leo did not go up the stairs facing the audit room—Mr. Grindall's room?"

Witness—"Quite certain."

Mr. Sergeant Bungle—"Why are you certain?"

Witness—"Cause he could not go home and go up those stairs at the same time."

Mr. Sergeant Bungle—"Why could not he?"

Witness, brushing his hat with his elbow—"Whoy, cause its only lawyers as can do two

contrary things against natur at the same time.”
(Laughter.)

Mr. Sergeant Bungle—“Witness, you may retire.”

Nancy Stokes, the landlady of the De Clifford Arms, was next examined; and deposed—that she was drinking tea with John and Mary Lee, at about six o'clock on the evening of the twenty-fourth of June last, when Thomas Grindall, the dowager Lady De Clifford's steward, and two policemen, entered Lee's cottage with a search warrant. Lee did not seem surprised at their coming, knowing that all the other houses in the village had been searched, and gave the officers his keys before they asked for them; but seemed perfectly thunderstruck when the diamonds and watch were found in his desk. Witness had known the prisoner many years, and believed him to be a very sober, respectable, and perfectly honest man. Witness thought there was no diamond missing out of the buttons when they were found; could not swear that there was not.

Charles Grant of the F division, and Joseph Trowbridge, of the G division of the Metropolitan Police, were next examined; and their evidence corroborated the last witness's statement, as to their search of the prisoner's house

on the twenty-fourth of June, and his quiet and proper conduct on that occasion.

Several witnesses were also called, who spoke in high terms as to the prisoner's general good character.

Davie Darby, the turnkey of the Triverton gaol, was next examined; and deposed—

For the last two months the prisoner and his daughter had lodged with him and his wife; and they had been quiet and orderly in every respect.

That one Sunday, the fifth day after they had been in prison, a gentleman had called to see them; had taken the apartments in Darby's house for them; and paid the first month's rent in advance.

Did not know the gentleman's name, or where he lived.

He often called.

The four guineas a week which he paid was not for the lodging, but for the board and lodging.

Witness did not know the name of the gentleman, never having heard it; but he *was* a gentleman.

“What proof can you give that you are speaking the truth.”

“*My* word, which I suppose will suffice,” said Cheveley, stepping forward for a moment, and giving the crier his card to hand to the judge.

Lord De Clifford turned for a moment, and glared fearfully upon Cheveley. A presentiment came over him that his presence boded him no good.

Cheveley having been recognised, his part of the evidence was deemed conclusive, and the trial proceeded.

Mr. Sergeant Carrington again addressed the jury for the prisoner; detailing the whole of poor Mary’s history, in a speech that was eloquent from its subject, and forcible from its truth. He then produced all Lord De Clifford’s letters, whether bearing his own signature or that of William Dale; and compared, analysed, and animadverted upon all and each of them. A great reaction appeared to have taken place in the feelings of the court. The people looked at Lord De Clifford and groaned, and then at the old man, and his pale statue-like daughter, who had never once raised her eyes, and wept. But Mr. Sergeant Puzzlecase again rose on behalf of his client, and burst into a perfect hurricane of oratory. He affected to treat the whole business of the letters with sove-

reign contempt ; said they were quite irrelevant to the cause for which the jury had been empannelled ; and that he must beg of those gentlemen to come to a decision without farther loss of time, as every possible advantage had been given to the prisoner at the bar, both as to a fair and impartial examination of his cause, and a strict and liberal examination of witnesses on his side ; that no clue whatever had been gained towards the slightest exculpation of him or his daughter ; that the *facts* remained precisely as they were, namely, that property to a considerable amount had been stolen from his clients, which property had not only been found in the possession, but in the most secret possession of the prisoner. "Now really, gentlemen of the jury," concluded Mr. Sergeant Puzzlecase, "you can have no hesitation in giving your verdict for the plaintiff, with such strong circumstantial evidence against the prisoner, and not a single *proof* that can be adduced in his favour.

"Plenty ! plenty !" cried a voice proceeding from one of two men, that were forcing their way through the crowd towards the witness box. The speaker was Miles Datchet ; the other, Dorio, Lord De Clifford's valet. The latter turned deadly pale when he beheld them ; and perfectly mad, between rage and fear, betrayed

himself by gasping out, as he pointed to Datchet, "Secure that man; he is an impostor—a liar. I gave him money to go to Spain."

"Hush! you had better sit down, my lord," said Mr. Tymmons. "All will be well."

But Lord De Clifford knew that all would not be well; and while he had yet strength he hurried from the court, to prepare a last struggle for the newspapers; determined to leave England that night, to prevent the law taking its course, at the suit of a beggar, whom a minute before he thought he had within his grasp, and was about to crush for ever!

Captain Datchet first of all stated, that as far back as last February, Lord De Clifford had consulted him upon the feasibility of getting the Lees imprisoned during his election, and eventually transported. That at first he (Datchet) had recoiled with horror from so black a scheme, but, in order to unmask Lord De Clifford and ultimately redress the Lees, he had feigned an assent to it. That at first all his communications with Lord De Clifford had been personal; but that, recollecting this would preclude the possibility of bringing any proof against him hereafter, he suddenly affected to misunderstand some of his wishes, and wrote to him from the country; which letter Lord De Clifford answered,

giving him full instructions how to proceed ; not indeed signing his name, but his hand-writing was too well known to be disputed. He next wrote to him begging he would give him three hundred guineas, and not pounds, to proceed to Spain ; which was the stipulation, when all things should be accomplished. To this Lord De Clifford agreed, sending him a draft for that amount, which he then produced in court, as well as Lord De Clifford's letter, bidding him remember that he was not to return to England under two years.

“ When we had decided upon what the things were that were to be conveyed into Lee's possession,” continued Datchet, “ my next difficulty was how to get them there ; for there was but one person sufficiently well acquainted with his house to know where to hide them, as if they had been hidden there by him ; and this person I knew was too sincerely his friend to be brought into the scheme, without great management. At length, however, I succeeded in convincing her that my only object was to expose Lord De Clifford, and serve the Lees ; and she consented. But her promise was given among the ruins of the old abbey above Cheveley Place ; and just as she had agreed to every thing, I was startled at hearing footsteps outside the aisle in which

we were talking; and fearing least we might be overheard, I suddenly broke from my companion and hurried down the glen; but she afterwards informed me, that the stranger who was walking there we had no cause to fear would betray us, even had he overheard us." (This part of Miles Datchet's statement Cheveley knew to be perfectly true.) "Well, this was last March, and every thing was to lie over till June. And when Lord De Clifford came down to Blinchingly, I suggested that Lee should be sent for to do some work; knowing that he would be incensed at being sent for, and would just go down, as the event proved, to the Park, to vent his indignation. Dorio, Lord De Clifford's valet, (as he is here to testify), was desired by his master, that morning, to give me the watch and the diamonds, which I was to give to the person who was to place them in Lee's desk."

Madge Brindal was called into court, and swore to the facts. Lord De Clifford's handwriting was also sworn to by several respectable witnesses; Cheveley having left the court with a feeling of sickening horror, to avoid being one of them.

Poor Lee was triumphantly acquitted; but Mary had fainted, and it was not till she found herself in the air, with all her former com-

panions, that so long had shunned her, crying over her, and showering down professions of affection and proffers of service, that she came to herself; and then every thing seemed like a painful and confused dream. "Where am I?" said Mary, looking wildly about her.

"With those who love and esteem you more than ever, dear Mary," said several young girls, pressing around her. At length she began to understand that all she saw and heard was real, and she burst into the first flood of happy tears that she had shed for years. Miles Datchet and Madge Brindal, knowing how the trial must terminate, had prepared a banquet among the ruins, to which the whole village were now invited, and which invitation they joyfully accepted.

"Willy is quite safe and well," whispered Madge to Mary, "but he might get cold, and so I thought it better not to bring him."

Mary felt the delicacy of feeling that had prompted this arrangement on the part of Madge, and as she pressed her hand, said—"always kind and considerate, Madge; thinking of, and for, everybody."

Mrs. Stokes had sent her husband up to the inn for a carriage and four, declaring that she would have the Lees made as much of, for that one day at least, as any, "*rubbishing* Member

among them." And while the crowd were still standing in groups in the market-place, up drove John Stokes, looking more like a lord (in his own opinion) than a landlord, as he jumped out, and placed Lee, Mary, Madge, and Mrs. Stokes, in the carriage, while he himself ascended the box and desired the postilions to drive on to the ruins at Cheveley: but the people insisted upon taking the horses off and drawing Lee through the town; in vain he remonstrated—all he said was drowned by their vociferous cheers, which were rather more genuine than those which were wont to echo round the purlieus of the "Golden Fleece."

The day, as we before stated, was beautifully fine over head, and as it advanced, became quite warm from the sun. Datchet had superintended all the arrangements at the ruins, and had erected temporary arbours of evergreens, which, combining with the natural beauties of the place, made the whole appear like a scene in Boccaccio, and there *is* a magic in fresh air, sunshine, and happy faces, that won't let people be miserable, if they are ever so well inclined; even Mary felt as she used to feel, and did not go beyond the present, where all were laughing, talking, and rejoicing, till the shades of evening closed in; when Datchet, who was master of the revels,

would not allow them to separate, but had large fires of underwood lit in every direction, and the old abbey itself illuminated with torches, so that at a little distance it looked as though it were on fire. After these arrangements, he set all the young people to dance, having provided music for the occasion, while the elder ones sat conversing in groups about the events of the day, and urging Lee to lose no time in prosecuting Lord De Clifford, which was a work of superelevation, as he had resolved not to let another day pass without doing so.

"Hush!" said Mary suddenly, "what was that noise?"

"Nothing," replied Datchet, "but the tramping of horses' feet."

"The tramping of horses' feet," echoed Madge, "it's more than that, listen again."

They did listen, and distinctly heard low moans, as if from a person in extreme pain.

"The sound comes from the Glen," said Lee.

"No, from the road," said Madge, again listening.

"From the road, certainly," said half a dozen voices.

"Some accident has happened," said Lee, "we had better go and see if we can be of any use." So saying, they armed themselves with

torches and repaired to the road, followed by the women, all except Mary, who, with a vague dread that some harm would happen to her father, kept by his side. When they reached the road they could see nothing, but heard the sound of a horse's hoofs galloping furiously away.

"It must be in the lower road," said Datchet, "if anything has happened. Hush!—Listen—there! I heard groans again. Some one has been thrown from their horse. Whoever they are, I wonder they should have come this upper road on so dark a night, the precipice is so dangerous, and I shouldn't wonder if horse and rider, and all, had gone down it. Here, Freddy, go on before, as you take up the least room, and light us down the winding path."

Accordingly they all descended, as quickly as safety would permit, and walked on for about a hundred yards, where they found a man weltering in his blood, with his skull frightfully fractured, and his leg broken and entangled in a stirrup. "Take care," said Mary, with a shudder, "we are walking in his blood."

"Poor creature! I wonder who it is?" said Lee. "Lend a light here, will you, Captain?" and taking the torch out of Datchet's hand, Lee stooped down and removed the gravel and

brambles from the face of the dead man, and at the spectacle that awaited him, the old man gasped as though he himself were dying; the forehead and one eye were completely smashed into the head, but all that remained was what had been—Lord De Clifford.

“Ma—Mary,” said he, in a hollow, low, but awfully distinct voice, extending his hand to draw his daughter to the spot, without removing his eyes from the body, “Mary, *look here!*”

Mary did look, gave one shriek, and sunk senseless into the arms of Madge, who caught her as she fell.

“He is gone. My enemy is gone!” continued the old man, in the same low, hollow, whistling voice, still gazing on the corpse. “He has evaded me, and left nothing but this insolvent flesh to wipe out his great score! But I will be honest; it is none of mine, thank God! They shall have it to whom it belongs. Stand off,” cried he, turning to the crowd, “don’t you see, I’ve work to carry home; look to Mary, there, and some one bring a plank from the ruins.”

There was a breathless stillness around, and Miles Datchet and Stokes silently re-ascended the winding path, to obey Lee’s command. As soon as they returned with the plank, the body

was placed upon it, and Lee ordered four men to carry it. "Here's a rare funeral," said he, "not a single tear, and I chief mourner! Forward, to Blichingly!" cried he, as if giving the word of command, and waving his stick like a sword. As the torchlight glared upon his pale and fearful face, none dared to disobey, but moved slowly on, all except Madge and Datchet, who remained with Mary, to try and get her home. Not a word was uttered by any of the procession as they moved along, till they arrived at the park lodge, when the woman came to the gate. Seeing such a crowd with torches in their hands, she refused to let them enter, till Lee ordered the men to lower the body, that she might see who it was, and then turning to her, said in a loud voice—

"Open, I say! none but the gates of Heaven can refuse to do so to Lord De Clifford!"

"The Lord preserve us!" said the woman, shading her eyes with her hand, to shut out the horrible sight, as she opened the gates to let them pass.

"Amen!" responded Lee, and again they proceeded for two miles through the park in perfect silence, till coming before the hall door, he cried, "Halt!" and having himself pulled the deep-toned bell, which was quickly answered,

the servants thinking it was Lord De Clifford returned,—and they thought rightly.

“Stand back, all of you,” said Lee, “out of sight, behind that buttress a little way. Tell your mistress *I* want her,” said he, to the servant who opened the door.

“Why, Mister Lee!” said the footman, “I am glad to see *you* at liberty again, but I am sorry to say that *I aint* at liberty to deliver your message, for the old lady is busy a-settling accounts with Mr. Grindall.”

“Tell her,” said Lee, “that I have a longer account for her to settle.”

“Why, how much do you take my place to be worth? Nothing, perhaps. Well, that *is* about the *valley* of it, so I don’t care if I do have a shy at her with your message. She can but call me ‘*sirrah*,’ and turn me away; and the comfort of living with her is, that it’s *unpossible* to go further and fare worse.”

The man then walked lazily away, his footsteps echoing through the great hall, till he turned into a narrow passage off it, and stopped before the door of a small room, in which the old lady always sat. Opposite the door was a modern French rosewood bureau, on the top of which stood a small eight-day mahogany clock with brass mouldings, a few modern rosewood chairs,

with brown holland covers, were ranged round the wall on the bare floor, in the centre of which was spread a small piece of Scotch carpet, and on it stood a small oval mahogany table, very black, and highly polished, at which she sat, opposite to Mr. Grindall, with a Pelion upon Ossa of files, papers, and ledgers, between them.

“Is Lord De Clifford come back?” said she, turning sharply round, as the servant opened the door.

“No, my Lady, it’s Lee, the carpenter, as says he has a long account for you to settle.”

“What insolence! Mr. Grindall, be so good—” but here she grew deadly pale and agitated—“How! can the trial have ended by *his* being here? Go,—ask,—see.”

“Compose yourself, my lady, and I will settle everything,” said Grindall rising. “But does your ladyship owe him anything?”

“Not a farthing, not a farthing!”

“Oh, then it’s a clear case,” said Mr. Grindall, reseating himself, with a contemptuous smile. “James, tell the old rascal to leave the house instantly.”

“Or Mr. Grindall will warn him off the premises.”

“And that her ladyship owes him nothing.”

“Dear, though, it’s very strange that De

Clifford is not back; yet, it's nearly nine o'clock."

"Oh, it's most likely his lordship remained to dine with the judges; for when I left the court everything was going on as smooth as possible, and Serjeant Puzzlecase was winding up his concluding address to the jury."

"Oh, well, perhaps so." Here James returned.

"Please you, my lady, Lee says as it's something he owes you."

"That he owes me? Well, let him come in, as Mr. Grindall is here."

"He says he won't, my lady, for he's took an oath that he'll never set his foot in this house."

"Vastly impertinent, and you are equally impertinent to bring me such a message. Does that insolent old fellow suppose I'll go to him? No, indeed."

But suddenly her resolve seemed changed, by the loud shouting of several voices, and the quick trampling of horses' feet: she and Grindall simultaneously rushed into the hall. At the great entrance they beheld a crowd of people, and a blaze of torches, which displayed Lord De Clifford's horse, neighing loudly, and covered with blood and foam, galloping furiously round and round the court.

“Good Heavens !” exclaimed the old lady, wringing her hands, as she approached the door, “Where is De Clifford?”

“Where we must all soon be,” said Lee, solemnly; “before that tribunal which has but *one* witness—our own soul! and but one judge—the God who made it! Here,” continued he, pointing to the body, as the men brought it forward, “here is what *was your* son. And now, having returned good for evil, and brought you your child, who helped to rob me of *mine*, I’ll go to what *was* my daughter.”

So saying, the crowd gave way, and Lee, giving one short husky laugh as he looked at Grindall, walked rapidly through it, and disappeared.

“Stop—secure—” said the old lady, pointing after him, but before she could finish the sentence, she sunk down in a fit on the corpse of her son

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CONCLUSION.

When all our leaves of life are seared by nature
 In due course, then do we gently fall to sleep
 Within the kind bosom of our mother earth ;
 But the Medean spring, whose fierce unnatural wrath
 Doth gem her children's hair with the white blossoms of the
 grave,
 Robs us of life, ere death has claimed his debt.

Unpublished Play.

“ And when you blushed, and could not speak,
 I fondly kissed your glowing cheek,
 Did that affront you ?
 Oh, surely not ; your eyes exprest
 No wrath, but said, perhaps in jest,—
 ‘ You’ll love me, won’t you ?’
 For sure my eyes replied, ‘ I will,’
 And you believe that promise still :
 You do, sweet, don’t you ?’
 Yes, yes, when age has made our eyes
 Unfit for questions or replies,
 You’ll love me, won’t you ?”

HOPE is a telescope, which brings objects within our reach, that are in reality as distant as ever, therefore Cheveley had constantly looked through it for the last eighteen months, at the end of which time he discarded it for reality.

It was a lovely morning, in that sweet and maiden time of year, “ the gentle month of May,” that Cheveley arrived at Grimstone, and leaving the carriage at the village inn, walked

up to the hall. The birds were caroling their happy concert among the young green leaves, and the butterflies, which had not yet exchanged their bridal wings of virgin white for the more gorgeous and matronly ones of purple and gold, seemed playing hide and seek among the flowers. Cheveley's hand trembled violently, as he opened the iron gate of the invisible paling that led into the lawn. Two figures were sitting under a tulip tree, they were Fanny and little Julia; the latter instantly recognized him, and breaking away from her aunt, ran up to him, and throwing her arms round him, said—

“Dear, dear Mowbray, I *am* so glad to see you again.”

“And I,” said Fanny, extending her hand, “suppose, out of civility, I must say the same thing.”

When Cheveley had kissed the child, and shaken hands very affectionately with Fanny, he stammered out, “Where is Ju—Julia?”

“*Julia*,” replied Fanny, laughing, “is in the drawing-room; there, that room where you see the window open and the blind down; but you really must find your own way there, for I have no idea of losing this fine morning, by playing Major Nonplus, or groom of the chambers, to you.”

“I think you are quite right,” laughed Cheveley, as he kissed his hand and walked on to the window. It was a low mullion window, one half of which was slid back; he listened for a moment, and hearing no sound, gently pushed back the blind and walked in. Lady De Clifford was standing at a table looking for a drawing, with her back to the window; he walked noiselessly up to her.

“I wish—” said she aloud.

“What?” asked Cheveley, passing his arm round her waist and drawing her towards him. Julia uttered a faint scream, and then said, with a blush and a smile—

“That you had not frightened me so.”

Julia, *my Julia!*” said Cheveley, kissing her passionately, as her beautiful head rested on his shoulder; “does not this moment repay us for all the past? Is it not enough if there was no future?”

“E vero, vero,” chirped the starling, who had been reinstated within the last few months; but Julia made no answer, *for there is a love that has no words*, and in this language Cheveley and she conversed for some minutes.

“I almost wish,” said she at last, “that we could die *now*, for I, who have never been happy before, am *too* happy.”

“You shall know nothing else, dearest, but happiness, till you surfeit on it; and then, for your own good, you know, I must begin a course of conjugal discipline, and make you unhappy again.”

“Nay,” said Julia.

“No answer, madam, if you please,” said Cheveley, kissing her into silence; “implicit obedience I must and will have.”

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A month after this truly marital speech, saw Julia, Marchioness of Cheveley, installed at Cheveley Place, as its happy, loving, and beloved mistress. Beryl, all things considered, bore her faculties meekly, notwithstanding that Mr. Sanford began to be *very attentive* to her, till about a year after her mistress's marriage, at the christening of the little Lord Mowbray, when there was such an influx of royalty and fine people, that it was no wonder greatness became an epidemic, and she looked half a head taller.

John Lee and his daughter, with Madge Brindal, who had become Mrs. Datchet, went to America, where Lord Cheveley settled two hundred a-year upon him, and Lady Cheveley promised to provide for Mary's child. Mrs. Stokes and her husband were allowed to change the De Clifford to the Cheveley Arms, with a

present of a new house, in which the former was so happy for a whole year, that although the Maidenhead bridge had given way, to the great detriment of the Great Western Railway, and several accidents had happened at sea, she never once thought of attributing any of them to her husband's laziness and stupidity. Mr. and Mrs. Tymmons continued happy in the midst of their *fine family*, which, however, suffered a diminution by Captain Cubs disencumbering them of Miss Isabella; but dreadful to relate, the very day of the wedding, Master Grimstone singed off his brother-in-law's left moustache, so that he found two flames in the Tymmons' family instead of one. Mr. Joseph Tymmons died as he had lived, a bachelor, and no fellow was ever found for the matchless Seraphina. Mr. Rush got a situation as amanuensis to a literary gentleman, where, by a steady perseverance in the course he is now pursuing, he has every prospect of—starving in a garret; his mother says, that he *must* rise, as he speaks Greek and Latin, and all the dead languages, *like a native*, which is likely enough, for he looks like a *corpse*. Alonzo, ungratefully "*left to better himself*," went to live with Mr. Hoskins, whose wife died of a broken heart at his extravagance, in less than a year. The Simmons's *all* married,—no doubt,

as the Tymmons's said, by dint of art. Miss Caroline Chubb continues to collect franks; but Miss Caroline Chubb, of Ferrybridge, having in the course of nature departed this life, Miss Caroline Chubb, of Triverton, was obliged to drop the junior. Mrs. Wrigglechops continued to keep her husband *low*, and regulate his monitory system; therefore, for once, money does *not* make the *mayor* go. Mr. Frederick Feedwell had prevailed upon Mrs. Tadpole to go off with him, and was to meet her for that purpose in a post-chaise, ten miles beyond Triverton; but by some unaccountable mistake, Major Tadpole met him instead, and after a hearty drubbing, left him to pass the night in a ditch, where he caught a feverish cold, that occasioned him more pain than all the indigestions he had ever had. Fuzboz is supposed to be out of print, as no one has ever heard of him since the Triverton election, having been but once seen since that event, *very drunk*, in the porter's chair at the Garrick. Major Nonplus never says a word about his wealth, having been *really* left forty thousand pounds six months ago, the miraculous effect of which has been, to make him talk less, and drink more. About a year after the Lees' departure to America, Freddy Flipps, whom they had taken out as "*a help*," returned, with the news

of poor Mary Lee's death. Her father did not long survive her, and Mary's child was brought to England by Datchet, where Lady Cheveley had him well and carefully brought up. The Dowager Lady De Clifford had been in a bad state of health, since her son's awfully sudden death, and having, contrary to Frump's advice, eaten of a crab-apple tart, died of a two days' illness. Her second son, Herbert, the present Lord De Clifford, hastened to England on the melancholy event, but evinced great fortitude and resignation till after the funeral, when it was discovered, that his mother not having made a will, Blichingly went to her grandchild, Julia Grimstone, as heir at law, so that his lordship has nothing to do but to continue a sort of *retail* Talleyrand, *in a very small way*, keeping in with every administration. Monsieur De Rivoli has become a member of the Suicide Club, at Paris, suicide being what self-love often ends in. The Savilles and Seymours form a delightful society at Cheveley, whose master and mistress evince their own happiness by diffusing happiness to all around; grateful to God for the blessings he has bestowed upon them, each seems to emulate the other, which shall best deserve them. Cheveley is vulgar enough to doat

upon his wife, and Julia's love and respect for her husband increases daily, from finding, that in every relationship of life, from the smallest to the greatest, he is a MAN OF HONOUR.

FINIS.



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